Three Cosmic Messages

Introduction

On October 15, 1844, one week before the Great Disappointment, a boy was born into a pious Lutheran family in Germany. His name was Friedrich Nietzsche, and he would become one of modernity’s most influential atheists. Believing that the Christian God was dying in the West, Nietzsche railed against the Christian religion’s continued moral influence, deriding it as a “slave morality”—the morality of the weak, who, in an attempt to protect themselves from the stronger, concocted silly notions such as “love your enemies.” For Nietzsche, modernity needed to get beyond antiquated notions of “good and evil,” exemplified by a character in one of his books (Thus Spake Zarathustra) who declared, “Smash the old law tablets!” (meaning, of course, the Ten Commandments).The year 1844 was also important for Karl Marx, the founder of communism. That year, Marx wrote a work called the “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,” published posthumously by the Soviet Union in 1932. The manuscripts show the early development of Marx’s ideology in which he argued for a totally materialist reality that moved through various economic stages until the workers of the world united, overthrew their capitalist oppressors, and created a utopia on earth. The year 1844 was an important one for Charles Darwin, too. In what has become known as the “Essay of 1844,” Darwin produced one of the earliest expressions of his evolutionary theory, even if it was not then made public. Only in 1859, with the publication of the book On the Origin of Species, did Darwin publicly promulgate his view that all life on earth originated from a common ancestor by natural and chance processes alone.The year 1844 was also, however, the fulfillment of the 2,300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14 and the same year that, out of the leftovers of the Great Disappointment, seeds were planted that would burgeon in a worldwide movement whose core message repudiates the core of Nietzschean, Marxist, and Darwinian ideology.Contrary to Nietzsche, the Seventh-day Adventist movement proclaimed that not only does God exist, but His universal code of morality (the “Old Law tablets”), the Ten Commandments, remains His ultimate standard of judgment and binding over all humanity. Contrary to Marx, the Seventh-day Adventist movement proclaimed that the great controversy between Christ and Satan, not a materialist flow of history, explained both our world’s history up to that point and how our history will end in the future: not in a human-made communist utopia, but in the supernatural establishment of God’s eternal kingdom. And contrary to Darwin, the Seventh-day Adventist movement taught that life originated not in the natural and chance process of random mutation and natural selection, but by the power of the Creator God, who in six days created life on earth and rested on the seventh. Could it be a coincidence that all these events happened in 1844? One should not think so.Nietzsche, Marx, Darwin—three influential figures whose work has caused humanity irreparable harm. But amid all these errors, God did not leave the world without a witness to His truth, which is why, among these destructive ideologies, He raised up a movement that would, over time, morph into the Seventh-day Adventist Church and that would proclaim His last-day truth to the world: the three angels’ messages. These messages refute the errors and misconceptions promoted by those three terribly deceived men.In a sense, the three angels’ messages are the marching orders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. At their core, they are the gospel, pure and simple, but the gospel declared in the context of “present truth” (2 Pet. 1:12). And this, the three angels’ messages, is our study for the quarter.Note From the Editors: The manuscript of this quarter’s inVerse Bible study is taken from the Adult Bible Study Guide and is used with permission. Questions and formatting have been adapted with minor edits and rearranged for the inVerse lesson structure and experience. Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts are from the New King James Version. Copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.Unless otherwise noted, Bible texts in EGW quotes are from the King James Version.Bible texts credited to NIV are from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.Bible texts from Phillips are from J. B. Phillips: The New Testament in Modern English, Revised Edition. © J. B. Phillips 1958, 1960, 1972. Used by permission of Macmillan Publishing Co.Bible texts credited to RV are from The Holy Bible, Revised Version, Oxford University Press, 1911.

JESUS WINS—SATAN LOSES

inTro

Outnumbered  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 12

**And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars;and she was with child; and she crieth out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered.And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems.And his tail draweth the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon standeth before the woman that is about to be delivered, that when she is delivered he may devour her child.And she was delivered of a son, a man child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and unto his throne.And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days.And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels;and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven.And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.And I heard a great voice in heaven, saying, Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuseth them before our God day and night.And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death.Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time.And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman that brought forth the man.And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream.And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth.And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus:**

OutnumberedIn Outnumbered: Incredible Stories of History’s Most Surprising Battlefield Upsets, Cormac O’Brien recounts the stories of armies that, though seriously outnumbered, still won. It tells of Hannibal’s army of 55,000 soldiers from Carthage defeating the “invincible” Roman army of 80,000 strong. It tells the amazing story of Alexander the Great’s Greek army defeating the empire of Persia. We, too, are in a life-and-death battle with a wily foe. We are outnumbered, fighting against incredible odds. The forces of evil appear invincible. We seem to be facing certain loss and defeat appears inevitable. Victory seems out of sight. From a merely human perspective, it seems that Satan’s forces will overwhelm us. But, thank God, though we are outnumbered, though the odds are (humanly speaking) stacked against us, though Satan’s attacks are vicious, through Jesus we will win at last. Summarized in a few words, the theme of the Bible’s last book, Revelation, is this: “Jesus Wins, Satan Loses.” The heart of this battle is outlined in Revelation 12, the focus of our study this week. This study will give a good preparation for understanding Revelation 14 and the three angels’ messages.

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The Battle in Heaven  
Revelation 12 presents a stream of dramatic episodes—snapshots of the agelong conflict between good and evil that began in heaven but will end here on earth. These episodes take us down the stream of time from the opening scene of Satan’s rebellion in heaven to his vicious attacks on God’s people in the last days. Revelation 12:7–9

**7 Then there was a war in heaven. Michael n and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. 8 But the dragon was not strong enough, and he and his angels lost their place in heaven. 9 The giant dragon was thrown down out of heaven. (He is that old snake called the devil or Satan, who tricks the whole world.) The dragon with his angels was thrown down to the earth.**

describes this cosmic conflict between good and evil. The freedom to choose is a fundamental principle of God’s government, both in heaven and on earth. God did not create robots, either in heaven or on earth. Created in the image of God, we as humans can make moral choices. The power of choice is closely aligned with the ability to love. If you take away the power of choice, you destroy the ability to love, for love can never be forced or coerced. Love is an expression of free will. Every angel in heaven was faced with the choice either to respond to God’s love or to turn away in selfishness, arrogance, and pride. Just as the heavenly angels were confronted with an eternal choice, Revelation presents each of us with eternal choices in earth’s final conflict. There has never been neutrality in the great controversy (see Luke 11:23

**23 “Anyone who is not with me is against me, and anyone who does not work with me is working against me.**

), and there will be none in earth’s final war. Just as every angel chose Jesus’ side or Lucifer’s side, all humanity will be led to their final, irreversible choice at the end of time. Who will have our allegiance, our worship, our obedience? This has always been the issue with humanity, and it will be so, however more dramatically, in the final crisis of earth’s history. But here is the incredibly good news: Revelation 12 describes Christ’s triumph in the conflict, and all we have to do, using our free will, is choose to be on His side, the winning side. How wonderful to be able to choose a side in a battle that you know, beforehand, will be the winner! From the start, Satan sought to destroy Christ (see Rev. 12:4

**4 His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and threw them down to the earth. He stood in front of the woman who was ready to give birth so he could eat her baby as soon as it was born.**

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**5 Then the woman gave birth to a son who will rule all the nations with an iron rod. And her child was taken up to God and to his throne.**

), yet failed in every attempt. At Christ’s birth, for instance, an angel warned Joseph and Mary about Herod’s vicious plans, and they fled to Egypt. Jesus faced Satan’s most enticing temptations in the wilderness with an “It is written” and thus found protection in the Word of God. In His death on the cross, He revealed the magnitude of His love and delivered us from the penalty of sin’s condemnation. In His resurrection, as our living high priest, He delivers us from the power of sin in our lives. In the Bible a rod is a symbol of dominion or rulership. Specifically in Revelation 12:5

**5 Then the woman gave birth to a son who will rule all the nations with an iron rod. And her child was taken up to God and to his throne.**

, a rod of iron is a symbol of an unbreakable, all-powerful, invincible rulership. Jesus faced every single temptation that we will ever experience, but He came out a conqueror. The devil is a defeated foe. Christ has triumphed over him in His life, death, and resurrection. Because Jesus has already defeated the devil on Calvary’s cross, we can be victorious, too. Christ’s victory over Satan is complete, but the great controversy between Christ and Satan is not yet over. Nevertheless, when we accept by faith what Christ has done for us, our sin debt is canceled and our sins forgiven. We stand perfect before God, covered by Christ’s righteousness. As Paul writes, we are “found in Him, not having [our] own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith” (Phil. 3:9

**9 and to belong to him. Now I am right with God, not because I followed the law, but because I believed in Christ. God uses my faith to make me right with him.**

). If we are forgiven, there is nothing that we can be accused of. Jesus conquered and overcame forever the worst that sin and evil could do to Him. He made the full assault on evil and overcame it. When we accept Jesus by faith, His victory is ours.Journal:What does the conflict of  
Revelation 12 imply about the reality of free will and free choice?Why is the assurance of  
salvation, because of Christ’s victory over Satan, so crucial to us?

inTerpret

The Woman and the Remnant  
The 1,260 days in Revelation 12:6

**6 The woman ran away into the desert to a place God prepared for her where she would be taken care of for one thousand two hundred sixty days.**

are parallel to the time, times, and half a time in Revelation 12:14

**14 But the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle so she could fly to the place prepared for her in the desert. There she would be taken care of for three and one-half years, away from the snake.**

. This same time prophecy describing the same time period is found in Daniel 7:25

**25 This king will speak against the Most High God, and he will hurt and kill God’s holy people. He will try to change times and laws that have already been set. The holy people that belong to God will be in that king’s power for three and one-half years.**

, Revelation 11:2

**2 But do not measure the yard outside the temple. Leave it alone, because it has been given to those who are not God’s people. And they will trample on the holy city for forty-two months.**

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**3 And I will give power to my two witnesses to prophesy for one thousand two hundred sixty days, and they will be dressed in rough cloth to show their sadness.”**

, and Revelation 13:5

**5 The beast was allowed to say proud words and words against God, and it was allowed to use its power for forty-two months.**

. Because these are prophetic symbols (a literal woman with wings did not go into the wilderness), we apply prophetic time, the day-year principle (see, for instance, Numbers 14:34

**34 For forty years you will suffer for your sins—a year for each of the forty days you explored the land. You will know me as your enemy.’**

and Ezekiel 4:4–6

**4 “Then lie down on your left side, and take the guilt of Israel on yourself. Their guilt will be on you for the number of days you lie on your left side. 5 I have given you the same number of days as the years of the people’s sin. So you will have the guilt of Israel’s sin on you for three hundred ninety days. 6 “After you have finished these three hundred ninety days, lie down a second time, on your right side. You will then have the guilt of Judah on you. I will give it to you for forty days, a day for each year of their sin.**

), to these prophecies. This means, simply, that one prophetic day equals one year. Commenting on this same prophetic period of time in Revelation 11:2

**2 But do not measure the yard outside the temple. Leave it alone, because it has been given to those who are not God’s people. And they will trample on the holy city for forty-two months.**

, the Andrews Study Bible states, “Historicist interpreters, therefore, have generally understood the period of 1,260 prophetic days to mean 1,260 literal years running from A.D. 538 to 1798” (p. 1,673 comments on Revelation 11:2

**2 But do not measure the yard outside the temple. Leave it alone, because it has been given to those who are not God’s people. And they will trample on the holy city for forty-two months.**

). A corrupt church, together with a corrupt state, oppressed, persecuted, and at times slaughtered God’s faithful people. This fierce, satanic persecution of Bible-believing Christians was an extension of the great controversy between good and evil. Coming out of the darkness of the Middle Ages, at the time of the Reformation in 1517, men and women were faced with a choice. Would they be faithful to the Word of God, or would they accept the teachings of priests and prelates? Truth triumphed once again, and God had a people who were faithful to Him in the face of mighty opposition. There are some fascinating and extremely encouraging expressions of God’s care in these verses. Revelation 12:6

**6 The woman ran away into the desert to a place God prepared for her where she would be taken care of for one thousand two hundred sixty days.**

uses the phrase, “a place prepared by God,” Revelation 12:14

**14 But the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle so she could fly to the place prepared for her in the desert. There she would be taken care of for three and one-half years, away from the snake.**

says the woman was “nourished” in the wilderness, and Revelation 12:16

**16 But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that came from the mouth of the dragon.**

declares that “the earth helped the woman.” At times of severe persecution, God provided for His church. As He did then, so He will do for His end-time remnant. The devil has been at war with Christ since his rebellion in heaven (Rev. 12:7

**7 Then there was a war in heaven. Michael n and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.**

). Satan’s purpose then and his purpose now is to seize control of the universe (see Isa. 14:12–14

**12  King of Babylon, morning star, you have fallen from heaven, even though you were as bright as the rising sun! In the past all the nations on earth bowed down before you, but now you have been cut down. 13  You told yourself, “I will go up to heaven. I will put my throne above God’s stars. I will sit on the mountain of the gods, on the slopes of the sacred mountain. 14  I will go up above the tops of the clouds. I will be like God Most High.”**

). The focus of his attention in the last days of earth’s history is upon God’s people. Revelation 12:17

**17 Then the dragon was very angry at the woman, and he went off to make war against all her other children—those who obey God’s commands and who have the message Jesus taught.**

emphatically declares that the dragon (Satan) was angry with the woman (the church) and went to make war with the rest of her offspring. This expression, “the rest of her offspring” is translated “the remnant” in the King James Version. God’s remnant remains loyal to Christ, obedient to His truth, and faithful to His mission. In Revelation 12:17

**17 Then the dragon was very angry at the woman, and he went off to make war against all her other children—those who obey God’s commands and who have the message Jesus taught.**

Satan (the dragon) is angry with the woman, God’s church. The devil is furious with a people who keep the commandments of God, and he will do everything he can to destroy them. Eventually he instigates a decree so that they cannot buy or sell and will be imprisoned and face death (see Rev. 13:14–17

**14 It fools those who live on earth by the miracles it has been given the power to do. It does these miracles to serve the first beast. The second beast orders people to make an idol to honor the first beast, the one that was wounded by the deadly sword but sprang to life again. 15 The second beast was given power to give life to the idol of the first one so that the idol could speak. And the second beast was given power to command all who will not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 16 The second beast also forced all people, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to have a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. 17 No one could buy or sell without this mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.**

). If Satan cannot destroy Christ, he will attempt to destroy the object of Christ’s deepest affection: His church. Earth’s last war is not centered on the various conflicts in any specific region of the world; it is fixed on the minds of God’s people scattered all around the globe. It is a battle between two opposing forces, Christ and Satan. Again, no one is neutral. The central question in this final war is “Who has our loyalty? Where is our allegiance?” Heaven calls for believers who are so captivated by Christ’s love, redeemed by His grace, committed to His purposes, empowered by His Spirit, and obedient to His commands that they are willing to face death itself for His cause. Our world is headed for a major crisis, but in Jesus, by Jesus, through Jesus, and because of Jesus, our victory is assured as long as we stay connected to Him, which we do by faith—a faith that leads to obedience. It all comes down to our own choice.Journal:What questions emerge after  
studying this lesson? What parts  
are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?How do you see the reality of Revelation 12:17

**17 Then the dragon was very angry at the woman, and he went off to make war against all her other children—those who obey God’s commands and who have the message Jesus taught.**

played out in your own life, in your own Christian experience? In other words,  
in what ways do you find the great controversy being played out in your own  
life?

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What relationship do the following verses have with Revelation 12? Ephesians 5:25–27

**25 Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it 26 to make it belong to God. Christ used the word to make the church clean by washing it with water. 27 He died so that he could give the church to himself like a bride in all her beauty. He died so that the church could be pure and without fault, with no evil or sin or any other wrong thing in it.**

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**32 That secret is very important—I am talking about Christ and the church.**

Psalm 2:7–9

**7  Now I will tell you what the Lord has declared: He said to me, “You are my son. Today I have become your father. 8  If you ask me, I will give you the nations; all the people on earth will be yours. 9  You will rule over them with an iron rod. You will break them into pieces like pottery.”**

Philippians 3:9

**9 and to belong to him. Now I am right with God, not because I followed the law, but because I believed in Christ. God uses my faith to make me right with him.**

Daniel 7:25

**25 This king will speak against the Most High God, and he will hurt and kill God’s holy people. He will try to change times and laws that have already been set. The holy people that belong to God will be in that king’s power for three and one-half years.**

Isaiah 14:12–14

**12  King of Babylon, morning star, you have fallen from heaven, even though you were as bright as the rising sun! In the past all the nations on earth bowed down before you, but now you have been cut down. 13  You told yourself, “I will go up to heaven. I will put my throne above God’s stars. I will sit on the mountain of the gods, on the slopes of the sacred mountain. 14  I will go up above the tops of the clouds. I will be like God Most High.”**

Revelation 13:14–17

**14 It fools those who live on earth by the miracles it has been given the power to do. It does these miracles to serve the first beast. The second beast orders people to make an idol to honor the first beast, the one that was wounded by the deadly sword but sprang to life again. 15 The second beast was given power to give life to the idol of the first one so that the idol could speak. And the second beast was given power to command all who will not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 16 The second beast also forced all people, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to have a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. 17 No one could buy or sell without this mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 12?

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Accepting Jesus’ Victory  
As depicted in the Bible, Jesus has never lost a battle against Satan. He is the mighty conqueror, the victor over the powers of evil. However, it is one thing to believe that Jesus was victorious over the temptations of Satan, but it is quite another to believe that Christ’s victory is our victory as well. Although the battle still rages on earth, Satan has lost. Period. This is true not only of Christ’s ultimate victory at the climax of human history but also in our battle over the principalities and powers of evil in our personal lives. Some Christians live in frustrated defeat. They hope for victory over some attitude or habit but never grasp the reality of Christ’s victory for them in their personal lives. Seven times in Revelation’s messages to the seven churches we find the expression “he who overcomes.” In Revelation 12:11

**11  And our brothers and sisters defeated him by the blood of the Lamb’s death and by the message they preached. They did not love their lives so much that they were afraid of death.**

we again find this concept of overcoming. The word “overcome” in the original language of the text is nikao. It can be translated as “to conquer, to prevail, to triumph, or to come through victoriously.” Revelation 12:11

**11  And our brothers and sisters defeated him by the blood of the Lamb’s death and by the message they preached. They did not love their lives so much that they were afraid of death.**

affirms that it is possible for us to be overcomers “by the blood of the Lamb.” In Revelation 5:6

**6 Then I saw a Lamb standing in the center of the throne and in the middle of the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb looked as if he had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that were sent into all the world.**

, in prophetic vision, John gazes into heaven and sees “a Lamb as though it had been slain.” Christ’s sacrifice is the focus of all of heaven’s attention. There is no better demonstration of the infinite, unfathomable love of God than the cross. When we accept by faith what Christ has done for us, our debt is canceled and we stand perfect in the sight of God. Our sins are forgiven (Col. 1:14

**14 The Son paid for our sins, n and in him we have forgiveness.**

, Eph. 1:7

**7 In Christ we are set free by the blood of his death, and so we have forgiveness of sins. How rich is God’s grace,**

, Col. 2:14

**14 He canceled the debt, which listed all the rules we failed to follow. He took away that record with its rules and nailed it to the cross.**

), and the “accuser of our brethren” has been “cast down” (Rev. 12:10

**10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying: “The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have now come. The accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accused them day and night before our God, has been thrown down.**

). We are redeemed, victorious, and saved, not because of our own merits, but because of Christ’s victories in our behalf.Journal:Meditate on Revelation 12 again and look for where Jesus is.What personal encouragement should you get from the fact that your accuser has been “cast down”? How do you see Jesus differently in light of these last days?

inSight

The Great Conflict  
In the Revelation are portrayed the deep things of God. The very name given to its inspired pages, “the Revelation,” contradicts the statement that this is a sealed book. A revelation is something revealed. The Lord Himself revealed to His servant the mysteries contained in this book, and He designs that they shall be open to the study of all. Its truths are addressed to those living in the last days of this earth’s history, as well as to those living in the days of John. Some of the scenes depicted in this prophecy are in the past, some are now taking place; some bring to view the close of the great conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of heaven, and some reveal the triumphs and joys of the redeemed in the earth made new. (Ellen G. White, The Acts of the Apostles [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911], 584.) The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness. God desires from all His creatures the service of love—service that springs from an appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience; and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service. So long as all created beings acknowledged the allegiance of love, there was perfect harmony throughout the universe of God. It was the joy of the heavenly host to fulfill the purpose of their Creator. They delighted in reflecting His glory and showing forth His praise. And while love to God was supreme, love for one another was confiding and unselfish. There was no note of discord to mar the celestial harmonies. (Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1890, 1940], 34, 35.) The Father decides the case of Satan, and declares that he must be turned out of heaven for his daring rebellion, and that all those who united with him in his rebellion should be turned out with him. Then there was war in heaven. Christ and His angels fought against Satan and his angels, for they were determined to remain in heaven with all their rebellion. But they prevailed not. Christ and loyal angels triumphed, and drove Satan and his rebel sympathizers from heaven. (Ellen G. White, Spiritual Gifts [Battle Creek, Mich.: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1864], vol. 3, 38.) Christ on the cross not only draws men to repentance toward God for the transgression of His law—for whom God pardons He first makes penitent—but Christ has satisfied justice; He has proffered Himself as an atonement. His gushing blood, His broken body, satisfy the claims of the broken law, and thus He bridges the gulf which sin has made. He suffered in the flesh, that with His bruised and broken body He might cover the defenseless sinner. The victory gained at His death on Calvary broke forever the accusing power of Satan over the universe and silenced his charges that self-denial was impossible with God and therefore not essential in the human family. (Ellen G. White, Selected Messages [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958, 1980], vol. 1, 341.) The great conflict that Satan created in the heavenly courts is soon, very soon, to be forever decided. Soon all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either for or against the government of heaven. Now, as never before, Satan is exercising his deceiving power to mislead and to destroy every unguarded soul. We are called upon to arouse the people to prepare for the great issues before them. We must give warning to those who are standing on the very brink of ruin. God’s people are to put forth every power in combating Satan’s falsehoods and pulling down his strongholds. To every human being in the wide world who will give heed, we are to make plain the principles at stake in the great controversy—principles upon which hangs the eternal destiny of the soul. To the people far and near we are to bring home the question: “Are you following the great apostate in disobedience to God’s law, or are you following the Son of God, who declared, ‘I have kept my Father’s commandments’?” (Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1902], vol. 7, 141.)Journal:After this week’s study of the passage, where is the great conflict between good and evil most evident?Where are areas that you see this conflict in society?Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

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Why is Revelation 12 a fitting introduction to the three angels’ messages, especially in view of the coming conflict at the time of the end?How is Revelation 12 reassuring to you personally in the daily temptations and trials you face?There are some who believe our actions are determined largely by our heredity and environment. Do you agree or disagree? What role does our choice have in determining our behavior? Discuss the relationship between our choice and God’s power as He operates in our lives.Think about how sacred free will and free choice must be to Jesus, who, though knowing it would lead Him to the cross (see 2 Tim. 1:9

**9 saved us and made us his holy people. That was not because of anything we did ourselves but because of God’s purpose and grace. That grace was given to us through Christ Jesus before time began,**

), gave us free will anyway. What should this tell us about how carefully we should use this sacred-but-costly gift? Read Revelation 12:11

**11  And our brothers and sisters defeated him by the blood of the Lamb’s death and by the message they preached. They did not love their lives so much that they were afraid of death.**

. What assurance of victory does Christ give us in this passage?Describe a time of trial or difficulty in your life when you could have easily become discouraged, but God provided a place of refuge for you and nourished you in your challenges. How did God provide support when you most needed it?Read Revelation 12:17

**17 Then the dragon was very angry at the woman, and he went off to make war against all her other children—those who obey God’s commands and who have the message Jesus taught.**

. What characteristics of God’s remnant, His last-day church, are found in this verse?There are some who think our love for our parents, our children, our spouses is nothing but an arrangement of atoms. What do you think? Is there more to it than that?How can what Paul wrote in Philippians 3:9

**9 and to belong to him. Now I am right with God, not because I followed the law, but because I believed in Christ. God uses my faith to make me right with him.**

be our own experience?

A MOMENT OF DESTINY

inTro

A Message of Destiny  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 14:14–20

**And I saw, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud one sitting like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.And another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to him that sat on the cloud, Send forth thy sickle, and reap: for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.And he that sat on the cloud cast his sickle upon the earth; and the earth was reaped.And another angel came out from the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.And another angel came out from the altar, he that hath power over fire; and he called with a great voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Send forth thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.And the angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great, of the wrath of God.And the winepress was trodden without the city, and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs.**

A Message of DestinyGod has always spoken to His people, giving them whatever relevant truths they need to hear at the time. From the warning about the Flood (Gen. 6:7

**7 So the Lord said, “I will destroy all human beings that I made on the earth. And I will destroy every animal and everything that crawls on the earth and the birds of the air, because I am sorry I have made them.”**

) to the first coming of Jesus (Dan. 9:24–27

**24 “God has ordered four hundred ninety years for your people and your holy city for these reasons: to stop people from turning against God; to put an end to sin; to take away evil; to bring in goodness that continues forever; to bring about the vision and prophecy; and to appoint a most holy place. 25 “Learn and understand these things. A command will come to rebuild Jerusalem. The time from this command until the appointed leader comes will be forty-nine years and four hundred thirty-four years. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and a trench filled with water around it, but it will be built in times of trouble. 26 After the four hundred thirty-four years the appointed leader will be killed; he will have nothing. The people of the leader who is to come will destroy the city and the holy place. The end of the city will come like a flood, and war will continue until the end. God has ordered that place to be completely destroyed. 27 That leader will make firm an agreement with many people for seven years. He will stop the offerings and sacrifices after three and one-half years. A destroyer will do blasphemous things until the ordered end comes to the destroyed city.”**

) to the pre-Advent judgment (Dan. 7:9

**9 “As I looked, thrones were put in their places, and God, the Eternal One, sat on his throne. His clothes were white like snow, and the hair on his head was white like wool. His throne was made from fire, and the wheels of his throne were blazing with fire.**

, 10

**10  A river of fire was flowing from in front of him. Many thousands of angels were serving him, and millions of angels stood before him. Court was ready to begin, and the books were opened.**

; 8:14

**14 The angel said to me, “This will happen for twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings. Then the holy place will be repaired.”**

) to final events before Christ’s return (Revelation 12–14), God has spoken to us many times throughout history. In these last days of humanity He has sent a special message to the world and to His people, designed to meet the need of the hour. In Revelation He depicts this message as being carried by three angels flying in midheaven with their urgent, end-time message to all the world. The three angels’ message is Jesus’ final message of mercy, a call that leads us from trusting in our own righteousness to trusting Jesus’ righteousness to justify, sanctify, and, at the end of time, glorify us. As always, though, we must choose Christ, choose to surrender to Him and to obey Him, and the choices we make now will indeed impact the choices we make in the final crisis ahead of us. Now is the time to prepare.

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A Harvest of Destiny  
Revelation 14 is Jesus’ final message of mercy to a fallen and rebellious world that has, for about 6,000 years, been steeped in sin and evil. Revelation’s message of Christ’s righteousness, which delivers us from the condemnation of sin as well as from the grip of sin in our lives, will echo and reecho throughout the earth. Jesus’ promise that “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world” given in Matthew 24:14

**14 The Good News about God’s kingdom will be preached in all the world, to every nation. Then the end will come.**

, finds its final fulfillment in Christ’s last-day message, in Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

, which says the gospel is proclaimed to “every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.” Three times in Revelation 22 Jesus says that He is coming quickly (verses 7, 12, 20). In the context of His soon return our Lord adds, “He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still” (verse 11). Revelation moves to one glorious climax where every person is led to decide for or against Christ. Of course, every day, by our choices in even the so-called little things, we are choosing either for or against Jesus. It’s not likely that someone who constantly makes the wrong choices in their life now will suddenly at the final crisis come down on Jesus’ side, especially when the force of the whole evil world is against them. Now, today, and every day we must choose to be faithful to Christ and to His commandments. “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments” (1 John 5:3, NKJV

**3 dFor this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And eHis commandments are not burdensome.**

). As Ellen G. White has said: “Jesus does not change the character at His coming. The work of transformation must be done now. Our daily lives are determining our destiny” (Last Day Events [Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1992], p. 295). In Revelation 14 there are two harvests. The harvest of golden grain represents the righteous, and the harvest of gory grapes represents the unrighteous or the lost. Both harvests are fully ripe. Every seed that was sown is fully mature. “Another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire” (Rev. 14:18

**18 And then another angel, who has power over the fire, came from the altar. This angel called to the angel with the sharp sickle, saying, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the bunches of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.”**

). Here is the angel who commands the fires of God’s final judgment. The harvest is ripe. Sin has reached its limits. Rebellion has crossed the line of God’s mercy. As evil and bad as things have been, it’s going to get even worse before it’s all over. Our loving God has done everything He can for us, which includes offering Himself on the cross as a sacrifice for our sin. “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21

**21 Christ had no sin, but God made him become sin so that in Christ we could become right with God.**

; see also Gal. 3:13

**13 Christ took away the curse the law put on us. He changed places with us and put himself under that curse. It is written in the Scriptures, “Anyone whose body is displayed on a tree n is cursed.”**

). What more could God have done beyond that cross? There is nothing more grace can do to redeem those who have repeatedly rejected the Holy Spirit. Here is the urgent prophetic message of Revelation 14: Every seed has gone to harvest. The grain is fully ripe, and the grapes are fully ripe. The people of God reveal His image of grace, compassion, mercy, and love before the universe. The followers of the evil one reveal greed, lust, jealousy, and hate. The character of Jesus is revealed in one group and the character of Satan in the other. The universe will see in the people of God a revelation of righteousness that, perhaps, no generation before it has ever witnessed. In contrast to the righteousness of Christ revealed in His people, the universe will see the full results of rebellion against God. Wickedness, evil, sin, and lawlessness will be on full display before human beings and angels. The contrast between good and evil, right and wrong, obedience and disobedience, will be apparent to all the universe, to both humans and angels.Journal:How does God shape our characters? What means does He use to help us to grow in grace? What can we do to more fully allow the Holy Spirit to transform us to be more like Jesus? How well can you discern the contrast between good and evil? Why is it important that we do? (See Heb. 5:14

**14 But solid food is for those who are grown up. They are mature enough to know the difference between good and evil.**

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inTerpret

The Son of Man  
Revelation 14 contains the key texts regarding the Lord’s last-day message to His people and to the world. Central to it all is the return of Jesus, the fulfillment of His promise that “you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven” (Mark 14:62

**62 Jesus answered, “I am. And in the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of God, the Powerful One, and coming on clouds in the sky.”**

). Jesus used the term “Son of Man” to refer to Himself 82 times in the Gospels. It was one of His favorite titles. He used it as an expression of endearment to identify with us. He is a Savior who understands us, has experienced our temptations, and has passed through our trials. He is the “Son of Man” who is returning to take us home. The Jesus who comes for us is the same Jesus who lived among us. He is qualified to redeem us because He became one of us, and as one of us, He met the full fury of Satan’s temptations and was victorious. In Matthew 16:27

**27 The Son of Man will come again with his Father’s glory and with his angels. At that time, he will reward them for what they have done.**

; 24:27

**27 When the Son of Man comes, he will be seen by everyone, like lightning flashing from the east to the west.**

, 30

**30 “At that time, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky. Then all the peoples of the world will cry. They will see the Son of Man coming on clouds in the sky with great power and glory.**

; and 25:31

**The King Will Judge All People 31 “The Son of Man will come again in his great glory, with all his angels. He will be King and sit on his great throne.**

, 32

**32 All the nations of the world will be gathered before him, and he will separate them into two groups as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.**

, notice the following elements: (1) Jesus, the Son of Man, is coming in glory with His angels; (2) He will divide the sheep from the goats (judgment); (3) the destiny of the nations and of all humanity will be decided for eternity. Think about the term “Son of Man” and what it says of Christ’s humanity. Though God, He became just like us, but unlike us, He never sinned. What amazing hope does this offer you in terms of knowing God’s love for us and knowing that He can relate to your struggles and give you victory over them? John states that “I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man” (Rev. 14:14

**The Earth Is Harvested 14 Then I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and sitting on the white cloud was One who looked like a Son of Man. n He had a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle n in his hand.**

). When Jesus ascended to heaven, Luke records in Acts 1:9

**9 After he said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud hid him from their sight.**

that as the disciples stood gazing up at the sky, “He [Jesus] was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.” The angels then declared to the amazed disciples in Acts 1:11

**11 They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking into the sky? Jesus, whom you saw taken up from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you saw him go.”**

: “This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.” Jesus ascended in a cloud of angels and will return in a cloud of angels. Furthermore, there is a divine truth embedded in this passage that may not be apparent: this “same Jesus,” the “Son of Man,” the one who walked the dusty streets of Nazareth, ministered in the crowded streets of Jerusalem, healed the sick in the villages of Israel, and preached on the grassy hillsides of Galilee is coming again. The Son of Man is also mentioned in light of the judgment in Daniel 7. Daniel views the seating of the heavenly court with ten thousand times ten thousand angelic, heavenly beings gathered around the throne. The judgment is set and the books—the celestial records of our lives—are opened before the universe. In Daniel 7:13

**13 “In my vision at night I saw in front of me someone who looked like a human being coming on the clouds in the sky. He came near God, who has been alive forever, and he was led to God.**

, 14

**14 He was given authority, glory, and the strength of a king. People of every tribe, nation, and language will serve him. His rule will last forever, and his kingdom will never be destroyed.**

, the Son of Man approaches the Ancient of Days, the Father, and receives His eternal kingdom. The judgment reveals before the entire universe that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have done everything possible to save all humanity. This judgment vindicates not only the saints but God’s own character against the false charges of Satan (see Job 1; 2; Ps. 51:1–4

**God, be merciful to me because you are loving. Because you are always ready to be merciful, wipe out all my wrongs. 2  Wash away all my guilt and make me clean again. 3  I know about my wrongs, and I can’t forget my sin. 4  You are the only one I have sinned against; I have done what you say is wrong. You are right when you speak and fair when you judge.**

).Journal:What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?Think about the fact that your whole life will come under scrutiny before God. What, then, is your only hope when this happens? (See Rom. 8:1

**Be Ruled by the Spirit 8 So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty. n**

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inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Revelation 14:14–20

**The Earth Is Harvested 14 Then I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and sitting on the white cloud was One who looked like a Son of Man. n He had a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle n in his hand. 15 Then another angel came out of the temple and called out in a loud voice to the One who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and harvest from the earth, because the time to harvest has come, and the fruit of the earth is ripe.” 16 So the One who was sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. 17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. 18 And then another angel, who has power over the fire, came from the altar. This angel called to the angel with the sharp sickle, saying, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the bunches of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.” 19 Then the angel swung his sickle over the earth. He gathered the earth’s grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s anger. 20 They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the winepress as high as horses’ bridles for a distance of about one hundred eighty miles.**

? Matthew 24:14

**14 The Good News about God’s kingdom will be preached in all the world, to every nation. Then the end will come.**

Matthew 16:27

**27 The Son of Man will come again with his Father’s glory and with his angels. At that time, he will reward them for what they have done.**

Acts 1:9–11

**9 After he said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud hid him from their sight. 10 As he was going, they were looking into the sky. Suddenly, two men wearing white clothes stood beside them. 11 They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing here looking into the sky? Jesus, whom you saw taken up from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you saw him go.”**

Mark 4:26–29

**Jesus Uses a Story About Seed 26 Then Jesus said, “The kingdom of God is like someone who plants seed in the ground. 27 Night and day, whether the person is asleep or awake, the seed still grows, but the person does not know how it grows. 28 By itself the earth produces grain. First the plant grows, then the head, and then all the grain in the head. 29 When the grain is ready, the farmer cuts it, because this is the harvest time.”**

Revelation 16:1

**The Bowls of God’s Anger 16 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the seven bowls of God’s anger on the earth.”**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 14:14–20

**The Earth Is Harvested 14 Then I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and sitting on the white cloud was One who looked like a Son of Man. n He had a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle n in his hand. 15 Then another angel came out of the temple and called out in a loud voice to the One who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and harvest from the earth, because the time to harvest has come, and the fruit of the earth is ripe.” 16 So the One who was sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. 17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. 18 And then another angel, who has power over the fire, came from the altar. This angel called to the angel with the sharp sickle, saying, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the bunches of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.” 19 Then the angel swung his sickle over the earth. He gathered the earth’s grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s anger. 20 They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the winepress as high as horses’ bridles for a distance of about one hundred eighty miles.**

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inVite

The Experience of Victory  
John describes Jesus as the “Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle” (Rev. 14:14

**The Earth Is Harvested 14 Then I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and sitting on the white cloud was One who looked like a Son of Man. n He had a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle n in his hand.**

). The word for “crown” is stephanos, a victor’s crown. When an athlete won an important contest, he was given a stephanos, a crown of honor, of glory, of victory. Jesus once wore a crown of thorns, symbolizing shame and mockery. He was once despised and rejected by men. He was reviled, ridiculed, spat upon, beaten, and whipped. But now He wears a crown of glory and comes again, this time as King of kings and Lord of lords. In Revelation 14:15

**15 Then another angel came out of the temple and called out in a loud voice to the One who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and harvest from the earth, because the time to harvest has come, and the fruit of the earth is ripe.”**

the angel comes from the presence of God in the glory of the temple and says, “It’s time. The harvest is fully ripe.” In other words, “Go, get Your children and bring them home.” Jesus repeatedly uses illustrations from agriculture in the New Testament. On more than one occasion He uses the symbolism of a ripening harvest to illustrate the growth of the seed of the gospel in the lives of His people. “The germination of the seed represents the beginning of spiritual life, and the development of the plant is a beautiful figure of Christian growth. As in nature, so in grace; there can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the development of the Christian life. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God’s purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime. As our opportunities multiply, our experience will enlarge, and our knowledge increase” (Ellen G. White, Christ’s Object Lessons [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1900, 1941], pp. 65, 66). Subtly, almost unnoticed at first, our characters and our personalities change based on the seeds that we are sowing in our minds. Sow good seeds, and you will produce good fruit. Sow the evil seeds of this world, and you will produce the fruit of this world in your character. If we sow indifference to God and His spiritual values and priorities, we reap the fruit of indifference: apathy, spiritual complacency, and frustration in our spiritual lives. This is why those who think, Well, I know that one day final persecution will come—the “mark of the beast” and so forth, but I will get it together when it does, are choosing a very dangerous path. God calls us now, at this moment, to surrender our lives to Him. The longer one delays responding to the Holy Spirit, the harder one’s soul becomes to the promptings of God, and the more susceptible to falling for and believing in the lies of the evil one it becomes. The ripening of the golden grain represents all those who are transformed by grace, motivated by love, and living obedient lives to the glory of Christ’s name. Their hearts are one with Jesus’ heart, and all they want is what He wants.Journal:Meditate on Revelation 14:14–20

**The Earth Is Harvested 14 Then I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and sitting on the white cloud was One who looked like a Son of Man. n He had a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle n in his hand. 15 Then another angel came out of the temple and called out in a loud voice to the One who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and harvest from the earth, because the time to harvest has come, and the fruit of the earth is ripe.” 16 So the One who was sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. 17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. 18 And then another angel, who has power over the fire, came from the altar. This angel called to the angel with the sharp sickle, saying, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the bunches of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.” 19 Then the angel swung his sickle over the earth. He gathered the earth’s grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s anger. 20 They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the winepress as high as horses’ bridles for a distance of about one hundred eighty miles.**

again and look for where Jesus is.Which trajectory are you growing in? How do you know?How can we experience Jesus’ victory now?

inSight

The Destiny of Character  
By the laws of God in nature, effect follows cause with unvarying certainty. The reaping testifies to the sowing. Here no pretense is tolerated. Men may deceive their fellow men and may receive praise and compensation for service which they have not rendered. But in nature there can be no deception. On the unfaithful husbandman the harvest passes sentence of condemnation. And in the highest sense this is true also in the spiritual realm. It is in appearance, not in reality, that evil succeeds. The child who plays truant from school, the youth who is slothful in his studies, the clerk or apprentice who fails of serving the interests of his employer, the man in any business or profession who is untrue to his highest responsibilities, may flatter himself that, so long as the wrong is concealed, he is gaining an advantage. But not so; he is cheating himself. The harvest of life is character, and it is this that determines destiny, both for this life and for the life to come. The harvest is a reproduction of the seed sown. Every seed yields fruit after its kind. So it is with the traits of character we cherish. Selfishness, self-love, self-esteem, self-indulgence, reproduce themselves, and the end is wretchedness and ruin. “He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” Galatians 6:8

**8 If they plant to satisfy their sinful selves, their sinful selves will bring them ruin. But if they plant to please the Spirit, they will receive eternal life from the Spirit.**

. Love, sympathy, and kindness yield fruitage of blessing, a harvest that is imperishable. In the harvest the seed is multiplied. A single grain of wheat, increased by repeated sowings, would cover a whole land with golden sheaves. So widespread may be the influence of a single life, of even a single act. (Ellen G. White, Education [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1903], 108, 109.) In the laws of God in nature, effect follows cause with unerring certainty. The reaping will testify as to what the sowing has been. The slothful worker is condemned by his work. The harvest bears witness against him. So in spiritual things: the faithfulness of every worker is measured by the results of his work. The character of his work, whether diligent or slothful, is revealed by the harvest. It is thus that his destiny for eternity is decided. Every seed sown produces a harvest of its kind. So it is in human life. We all need to sow the seeds of compassion, sympathy, and love; for we shall reap what we sow. Every characteristic of selfishness, self-love, self-esteem, every act of self-indulgence, will bring forth a like harvest. He who lives for self is sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh he will reap corruption. (White, Christ’s Object Lessons, 84.) It is a law both of the intellectual and the spiritual nature that by beholding we become changed. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. It becomes assimilated to that which it is accustomed to love and reverence. Man will never rise higher than his standard of purity or goodness or truth. If self is his loftiest ideal, he will never attain to anything more exalted. Rather, he will constantly sink lower and lower. The grace of God alone has power to exalt man. Left to himself, his course must inevitably be downward. (Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911], 555.) If you have become estranged and have failed to be Bible Christians, be converted; for the character you bear in probationary time will be the character you will have at the coming of Christ. If you would be a saint in heaven, you must first be a saint on earth. The traits of character you cherish in life will not be changed by death or by the resurrection. You will come up from the grave with the same disposition you manifested in your home and in society. Jesus does not change the character at His coming. The work of transformation must be done now. Our daily lives are determining our destiny. (Ellen G. White, The Adventist Home [Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1952], 16.) Journal:What has changed for you personally after this week’s study?Where are areas of further change needed in your life?Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

How do you understand that “at every stage of development our life may be perfect”? What does that mean, especially when we can see our faults and defective characters now?What is the relationship between being saved by grace and growing in grace in the context of Revelation 14:14–20

**The Earth Is Harvested 14 Then I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and sitting on the white cloud was One who looked like a Son of Man. n He had a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle n in his hand. 15 Then another angel came out of the temple and called out in a loud voice to the One who was sitting on the cloud, “Take your sickle and harvest from the earth, because the time to harvest has come, and the fruit of the earth is ripe.” 16 So the One who was sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. 17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. 18 And then another angel, who has power over the fire, came from the altar. This angel called to the angel with the sharp sickle, saying, “Take your sharp sickle and gather the bunches of grapes from the earth’s vine, because its grapes are ripe.” 19 Then the angel swung his sickle over the earth. He gathered the earth’s grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God’s anger. 20 They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the winepress as high as horses’ bridles for a distance of about one hundred eighty miles.**

and the harvest principle?Discuss the elements necessary for the growth of plants and compare that to our spiritual growth. What are the similarities? What can we learn that we can apply to our own lives?Is there a difference between our God-given ability to choose and our willpower? Why is understanding this difference important for the growing Christian?Why is the title “Son of Man” an encouragement in the judgment hour as we anticipate the second coming of Christ?Why is it comforting to realize that a Man, a Human Being, is up there representing us in the judgment?

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

inTro

Our Identifying Statement of Faith  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 14:6

**And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people;**

Our Identifying Statement of FaithIsrael’s clear, identifiable, and powerful statement of faith, found in Deuteronomy 6:4

**4 Listen, people of Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord.**

, set them firmly apart from the polytheistic heathens around them: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.”Throughout the centuries the chanting of the Shema, which is the name of the prayer in Deuteronomy 6 (based on the Hebrew word for “hear”), reminded the Jews of the spiritual vision that united them as a people and strengthened their resolve to maintain their unique identity as worshipers of the one true God.For Seventh-day Adventists the three angels’ messages in Revelation 14 are our Shema. They are our identifying statement of faith. They define who we are as a people and describe our mission to the world. In short, our unique prophetic identity is outlined in Revelation 14:6–12

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people. 7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.” 8 Then the second angel followed the first angel and said, “Ruined, ruined is the great city of Babylon! She made all the nations drink the wine of the anger of her adultery.” 9 Then a third angel followed the first two angels, saying in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his idol and gets the beast’s mark on the forehead or on the hand, 10 that one also will drink the wine of God’s anger, which is prepared with all its strength in the cup of his anger. And that person will be put in pain with burning sulfur before the holy angels and the Lamb. 11 And the smoke from their burning pain will rise forever and ever. There will be no rest, day or night, for those who worship the beast and his idol or who get the mark of his name.” 12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

, and it is here that we find our passion to proclaim the gospel to the world. In this week’s lesson we will begin a detailed study of Revelation 14:6–12

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through the eyes of grace as we listen to God speaking to our hearts.

inGest

A Storybook of Grace  
When most people think about the Bible’s last book, Revelation, they do not think about God’s grace. When they consider God’s last-day message, their thoughts often turn immediately to frightening beasts, mystic symbols, and strange images. The book of Revelation scares as many people as it reassures, which is unfortunate because it is indeed saturated with grace and filled with hope. Even amid the scary beasts and warnings of persecution and hard times ahead, God still gives us reasons to rejoice in His salvation. Revelation is all about Jesus. It is His message to His people and is especially applicable to His church in the last days. It is a grace-filled message of our end-time hope. Throughout the book Christ is described as the slain Lamb, and a blessing is promised to those who read, under-stand, and act on the truths revealed. According to Revelation 1:5

**5 and from Jesus Christ. Jesus is the faithful witness, the first among those raised from the dead. He is the ruler of the kings of the earth. He is the One who loves us, who made us free from our sins with the blood of his death.**

, 6

**6 He made us to be a kingdom of priests who serve God his Father. To Jesus Christ be glory and power forever and ever! Amen.**

, Jesus is the one who has “loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father.” In Christ we are forgiven. Grace pardons our past, empowers our present, and provides hope for our future. In Christ we are delivered from sin’s penalty and power, and one day soon we will be delivered from sin’s presence. This is the message of the last book of the Bible. It is also an urgent message, first depicted as an angel flying swiftly in midheaven carrying the “everlasting gospel.” No wonder, then, that they are grace-filled messages full of hope and promise for us as broken and suffering beings! Though it’s easy to focus on the beasts and warnings of the last days, how can we learn to balance all these out with what is undeniably the most important message of Revelation: Christ’s self-sacrificing death in our behalf? These messages of hope and grace are also the story of a Savior’s immeasurable love; the story of Jesus, who loves us so much that He would rather experience hell itself than have one of us lost. They are the story of a boundless, incomprehensible, undying, infinite love. God is never caught by surprise. He is not subject to the changing winds of humanity’s choices. As we have already seen, His plan to deliver us from the domain of sin was not an afterthought. God was not caught off guard by the awful drama of sin when it reared its ugly head for the first time. The phrase “everlasting gospel” in Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

speaks of the past, the present, and the future. When God created humanity with the capacity to make moral choices, He anticipated that they would make errant ones. Once His creatures had the capacity to choose, they had the capacity to rebel against His loving nature. The only way to avoid this reality would be to create robot beings controlled and manipulated by some divine cosmic plan. Forced allegiance is contrary to God’s very nature. Love requires choice, and once beings are given the power of choice, the possibility of making wrong decisions exists. God had therefore conceived the plan of salvation before our first parents’ rebellion in Eden. As Ellen White puts it: “The plan for our redemption was not an afterthought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam. It was a revelation of ‘the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal.’ Romans 16:25

**25 Glory to God who can make you strong in faith by the Good News that I tell people and by the message about Jesus Christ. The message about Christ is the secret that was hidden for long ages past but is now made known.**

, R.V. It was an unfolding of the principles that from eternal ages have been the foundation of God’s throne” (The Desire of Ages [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898, 1940], p. 22). The “eternal gospel” speaks not only of the past and present; it is the basis of a future with hope. It speaks of living eternally with the One whose heart is aching to be with us forever.Journal:How is grace more than just forgiveness? How is grace more than transformative power?What are some areas in your life that demonstrate God’s grace?

inTerpret

A Global Movement  
According to the urgent, end-time message of the first of these three angels, the “everlasting gospel” is to be proclaimed to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. Here is a mission so grand and comprehensive that it is all-consuming. It demands our best effort and requires our total commitment. It leads us from a preoccupation with our own self-interest to a passion for Christ’s service. It inspires us with something larger than ourselves and leads us out of the narrow confines of our own minds to a grander vision. In his book A Quest for More: Living for Something Bigger Than You Paul David Tripp discusses the psychological need of every human being to be part of something larger than themselves, describing it in an interview as follows: “Human beings were created to be part of something bigger than their own lives. Sin causes us to shrink our lives down to the size of our lives. The grace of Christ is given to rescue us from the claustrophobic confines of our own little self-focused kingdom and frees us to live for the eternal purposes and satisfying delights of the kingdom of God” (“Living for Something Bigger Than Yourself,” interview by the B&B Media Group, The Christian Broadcasting Network [n.d.], www.cbn.com/entertainment/books/questformore.aspx?mobile=false&u=1&option=print). There is nothing more inspiring, more fulfilling, or more rewarding than being part of a divine movement, raised up by God to accomplish a task far larger than any one human being could ever accomplish on their own. The heavenly commission described in Revelation 14 is the greatest task ever assigned to God’s church. What could be bigger than being used by the Creator of the cosmos to make an eternal difference in the universe? It is an earnest appeal to commit our lives to heaven’s grandest task: revealing God’s incomprehensible love to the world before Jesus’ return. Through a perceptive, deep study of the Bible, the early Adventists gained a growing understanding of the significance of these messages. They sensed that God had a message tailor-made for this generation—an urgent end-time message that must be proclaimed to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people to prepare the world for Christ’s return. The messages of the three angels have been the motivation for Adventist missions since their beginning. In 1874 the General Conference sent our first missionary to Europe. Ellen White called John Andrews “the ablest man in our ranks.” Andrews spoke at least seven languages, could repeat the New Testament from memory, and knew most of the Old Testament. He was a brilliant scholar, a prolific writer, a powerful preacher, and a competent theologian. Why send a man like that to a place where there were very few believers? Why send “the ablest man” you had to an unknown mission field? And why was he willing to go? His wife had died a few years earlier. Why would he be willing to leave family and friends behind in America and sail with his two children to an unknown land, risking all for the cause of Christ? There is only one reason: He believed that Jesus is coming soon, that the message of end-time truth must go to the entire world, and that it must not be delayed any longer. Throughout our history our brightest and our best have traveled to the ends of the earth to proclaim God’s last-day message. They were teachers, medical personnel, pastors, farmers, mechanics, carpenters, and tradesmen of all types. Some were denominational employees, but many were not. They were laypeople who believed Jesus is coming soon. The preaching of the everlasting gospel leaps across geographical boundaries. It penetrates earth’s remotest areas. It reaches people of every language and culture. It will eventually impact the entire world. How fascinating to know that our message has so far reached more than 210 of the world’s 235 countries recognized by the United Nations.Journal:What questions emerge after studying this lesson? Which parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?What role could you play, and how could you better play it, in helping spread the three angels’ messages to every “nation, tribe, tongue, and people”?

inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

? 1 Corinthians 15:1–4

**The Good News About Christ 15 Now, brothers and sisters, I want you to remember the Good News I brought to you. You received this Good News and continue strong in it. 2 And you are being saved by it if you continue believing what I told you. If you do not, then you believed for nothing. 3 I passed on to you what I received, of which this was most important: that Christ died for our sins, as the Scriptures say; 4 that he was buried and was raised to life on the third day as the Scriptures say;**

Romans 3:24–26

**24 and all need to be made right with God by his grace, which is a free gift. They need to be made free from sin through Jesus Christ. 25 God sent him to die in our place to take away our sins. We receive forgiveness through faith in the blood of Jesus’ death. This showed that God always does what is right and fair, as in the past when he was patient and did not punish people for their sins. 26 And God gave Jesus to show today that he does what is right. God did this so he could judge rightly and so he could make right any person who has faith in Jesus.**

1 Peter 1:18–20

**18 You know that in the past you were living in a worthless way, a way passed down from the people who lived before you. But you were saved from that useless life. You were bought, not with something that ruins like gold or silver, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, who was like a pure and perfect lamb. 20 Christ was chosen before the world was made, but he was shown to the world in these last times for your sake.**

Matthew 28:19

**19 So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.**

, 20

**20 Teach them to obey everything that I have taught you, and I will be with you always, even until the end of this age.”**

Acts 1:8

**8 But when the Holy Spirit comes to you, you will receive power. You will be my witnesses—in Jerusalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and in every part of the world.”**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

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inVite

The “Everlasting” Gospel  
Notice what Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

, the beginning of the three angels’ messages, begins with: the “eternal” or “everlasting” gospel. If we fail to understand the depth of the gospel, we will miss the entire point of the three angels’ messages. We can never fully understand the issues in God’s judgment-hour message, the fall of Babylon, or the mark of the beast if we do not understand the gospel. The gospel is the incredibly good news of Christ’s death for our sins, His glorious resurrection, and His ever-present love and concern for us. By faith in His shed blood and resurrection, we are delivered from both sin’s penalty and power. Christ consumed the apostle Paul’s thoughts and was at the center of his teaching and preaching. The crucified Christ redeemed him from the condemnation and guilt of his past. The resurrected Christ gave him power for the present, and the returning Christ gave him hope for the future. And, praise God, He does the same for us. Christ’s grace is undeserved and unearned. Jesus died the agonizing death that lost sinners will die. He experienced the fullness of the Father’s wrath, or judgment, against sin. He was rejected so that we could be accepted. He died the death that was ours so that we can live the life that was His. This plan, the plan of salvation, was put in place even before the beginning of time (2 Tim. 1:9

**9 saved us and made us his holy people. That was not because of anything we did ourselves but because of God’s purpose and grace. That grace was given to us through Christ Jesus before time began,**

, Titus 1:2

**2 That faith and that knowledge come from the hope for life forever, which God promised to us before time began. And God cannot lie.**

, Eph. 1:4

**4 That is, in Christ, he chose us before the world was made so that we would be his holy people—people without blame before him.**

), which helps explain why it is called the “everlasting” gospel. God knew what would happen before the world had even been created, so He instituted the plan of salvation to meet the crisis head-on.Journal:Meditate on Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

again and look for where Jesus is.How does the plan of salvation bring you wonder and awe? If it doesn’t, why not?What works can humanity possibly add, even by the best-intentioned, Holy Spirit-filled works, to what Christ had done for us at the cross?

inSight

The Global Grace of the Gospel  
Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13

**13 And the second beast does great miracles so that it even makes fire come down from heaven to earth while people are watching.**

. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand. (Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911], 612.) All who receive the gospel message into the heart will long to proclaim it. The heaven-born love of Christ must find expression. Those who have put on Christ will relate their experience, tracing step by step the leadings of the Holy Spirit—their hungering and thirsting for the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, the results of their searching of the Scriptures, their prayers, their soul agony, and the words of Christ to them, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” It is unnatural for any to keep these things secret, and those who are filled with the love of Christ will not do so. In proportion as the Lord has made them the depositaries of sacred truth will be their desire that others shall receive the same blessing. And as they make known the rich treasures of God’s grace, more and still more of the grace of Christ will be imparted to them. They will have the heart of a little child in its simplicity and unreserved obedience. Their souls will pant after holiness, and more and more of the treasures of truth and grace will be revealed to them to be given to the world. (Ellen G. White, Christ’s Object Lessons [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1900, 1941], 125.) In commissioning His disciples to go “into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,” Christ assigned to men the work of extending the knowledge of His grace. But while some go forth to preach, He calls upon others to answer His claims upon them for offerings with which to support His cause in the earth. He has placed means in the hands of men, that His divine gifts may flow through human channels in doing the work appointed us in saving our fellow men. This is one of God’s ways of exalting man. It is just the work that man needs, for it will stir the deepest sympathies of his heart and call into exercise the highest capabilities of the mind. (Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1909], vol. 9, 255.) It is our own character and experience that determine our influence upon others. In order to convince others of the power of Christ’s grace, we must know its power in our own hearts and lives. The gospel we present for the saving of souls must be the gospel by which our own souls are saved. Only through a living faith in Christ as a personal Saviour is it possible to make our influence felt in a skeptical world. If we would draw sinners out of the swift-running current, our own feet must be firmly set upon the Rock, Christ Jesus. The badge of Christianity is not an outward sign, not the wearing of a cross or a crown, but it is that which reveals the union of man with God. By the power of His grace manifested in the transformation of character the world is to be convinced that God has sent His Son as its Redeemer. No other influence that can surround the human soul has such power as the influence of an unselfish life. The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian. (Ellen G. White, The Ministry of Healing [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1905], 469, 470.)Journal:After this week’s study of the passage, how have you more deeply internalized the gospel?Where can you personally spread the message of Christ’s gospel?Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

How does the gospel give meaning and purpose to our meager, short-lived, often corrupt, damaged, and disappointing lives (who doesn’t have some of those things in their existence?)?What can these small, self-contained packets of meat (us) mean in contrast to the infinity that surrounds it?“Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel’s message, and I have answered, ‘It is the third angel’s message in verity’ ” (Ellen G. White, in Review and Herald, April 1, 1890). What relationship does justification by faith have to the three angels’ messages?What is so “everlasting” about the gospel?What is the scope of the proclamation of the everlasting gospel, and why is the answer important to us and our mission and calling as a church? What does it mean that Seventh-day Adventists are in so many countries of the world? What does it say about how God has so far blessed our efforts? At the same time, how can your local church or even your local Sabbath School play a larger role in “finishing the work”?What does Ephesians 1:4

**4 That is, in Christ, he chose us before the world was made so that we would be his holy people—people without blame before him.**

mean that even before the “foundation of the world” you were “chosen” in Christ to have salvation in Him? What makes this truth so encouraging?What has been your own experience in being involved in something bigger than yourself? How does that experience help you understand the point of this week’s study?What could be bigger than being used by the Creator of the cosmos to make an eternal difference in the universe?

FEAR GOD AND GIVE GLORY TO HIM

inTro

Applauding the Apocalypse  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 14:7, 12

**and he saith with a great voice, Fear God, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters.Here is the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.**

Applauding the Apocalypse Danish author Søren Kierkegaard once told a parable about the end-time that went something like this: A fire broke out backstage in a big theater. A clown, who had been part of the performance, came out to warn the audience: Get out; the place is on fire! The audience thought it was just a big joke, part of the show, that’s all, and just applauded. He repeated the warning: Get out! Get out! But the more emphatically he warned them, the greater the applause. For Kierkegaard, that was how the world is going to end: to the general applause of people who believe it’s a joke.The end of the world and the events leading up to it are, as we know, no joke. The world faces the most serious crisis since the Flood. In fact, Peter himself uses the story of the Flood as a symbol of the end, warning that just as the world of old perished by water, in the end-times, “the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10

**10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The skies will disappear with a loud noise. Everything in them will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be exposed.n**

). Having been warned about what is coming, we must be prepared for it.

inGest

Fearing God  
For our generation the purpose of the book of Revelation is to prepare a people to be ready for Jesus’ soon return and to unite with Him in spreading His last-day message to the world. Revelation reveals the plans of God and unmasks the plans of Satan. It presents God’s final appeal, His urgent, eternal, and universal message for all humanity. The Greek New Testament word for “fear” found in Revelation 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

is phobeo. It is used here not in the sense of being afraid of God, but in the sense of reverence, awe, and respect. It conveys the thought of absolute loyalty to God and full surrender to His will. It is an attitude of mind that is God-centered rather than self-centered. It is the opposite of Lucifer’s attitude in Isaiah 14:13

**13  You told yourself, “I will go up to heaven. I will put my throne above God’s stars. I will sit on the mountain of the gods, on the slopes of the sacred mountain.**

, 14

**14  I will go up above the tops of the clouds. I will be like God Most High.”**

when he says in his heart, “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.” Instead, it is the attitude of Christ, who, though He was “in the form of God, . . . humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:6

**6  Christ himself was like God in everything. But he did not think that being equal with God was something to be used for his own benefit.**

, 8

**8  And when he was living as a man, he humbled himself and was fully obedient to God, even when that caused his death—death on a cross.**

). The essence of the great controversy revolves around submission to God. Lucifer was self-centered. He refused to submit to any authority except his own. Rather than submit to the One upon the throne, Lucifer desired to rule from the throne. Put simply, to fear God is to place Him first in our thinking. It is to renounce our self-centeredness and pride and to live a life wholly for Him. It obviously must be important since it’s the first words out of the mouth of the first angel of the three. We therefore must take heed. The Bible reveals a link between fearing God and keeping His commandments (Deut. 6:2

**2 You, your children, and your grandchildren must respect the Lord your God as long as you live. Obey all his rules and commands I give you so that you will live a long time.**

; Ps. 119:73

**73  You made me and formed me with your hands. Give me understanding so I can learn your commands.**

, 74

**74  Let those who respect you rejoice when they see me, because I put my hope in your word.**

; Eccles. 12:13

**13  Now, everything has been heard, so I give my final advice: Honor God and obey his commands, because this is all people must do.**

, 14

**14  God will judge everything, even what is done in secret, the good and the evil.**

). Fearing God is an attitude of reverential respect that leads us to obedience. Heaven’s urgent appeal is for those saved by grace to be obedient to God’s commands (Eph. 2:8–10

**8 I mean that you have been saved by grace through believing. You did not save yourselves; it was a gift from God. 9 It was not the result of your own efforts, so you cannot brag about it. 10 God has made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which God planned in advance for us to live our lives doing.**

). Grace does not free us from obeying His commands. The gospel sets us free from the law’s condemnation, not from our responsibility to obey it. Grace not only delivers us from the guilt of our past but also empowers us to live godly, obedient lives in the present. The apostle Paul declares that “we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations” (Rom. 1:5

**5 Through Christ, God gave me the special work of an apostle, which was to lead people of all nations to believe and obey. I do this work for him.**

). There are some people who have the strange idea that salvation by grace somehow negates the law of God or minimizes the necessity for obedience. They believe that any talk about obedience is legalism. They have declared, “All I want is Jesus.” The question is, which Jesus? A Jesus of our own making, or the Jesus of Scripture? The Christ of Scripture never leads us to downplay His law, which is the transcript of His character (see John 1:1

**Christ Comes to the World 1 In the beginning there was the Word. n The Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

, 14

**14 The Word became a human and lived among us. We saw his glory—the glory that belongs to the only Son of the Father—and he was full of grace and truth.**

). The Christ of Scripture never leads us to minimize the doctrines of the Bible, which reveal more clearly who He is. Christ is the embodiment of all doctrinal truth. He is truth incarnate and doctrine lived out. Revelation’s final appeal calls us through faith in Jesus to accept the fullness of everything He offers. It calls us to “fear God,” which is expressed by faith in His ability to empower us to live godly, obedient lives. Journal: How would you explain to someone, in a positive way, why “the fear of God” is a good thing? How do Jesus’ words here, “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt. 10:28

**28 Don’t be afraid of people, who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul. The only one you should fear is the one who can destroy the soul and the body in hell.**

), help us understand what it means to fear God?

inTerpret

A God-centered Life  
In an age of consumerism, when secular values have made self the center, heaven’s appeal is to turn from the tyranny of egocentricity and the bondage of self-inflated importance and to place God at the center of our lives. For some, money is the center of their lives. For others, it is pleasure or power. For still others, it may be sports, music, or entertainment. Revelation’s message is a clarion call to fear, respect, and honor God as life’s true center. The main issue in earth’s final conflict is a battle for the mind. It is one of allegiance, authority, and commitment to God’s will. The final battle in the great controversy is between good and evil over which controls our thoughts. The apostle Paul gives us this admonition: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5

**Be Unselfish Like Christ 5 In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus.**

). The word “let” means to allow or to choose. It speaks of a volitional act of the will. The mind is the citadel of our being. The decision to have the mind of Christ is the decision to allow Jesus to shape our thinking and by extension our being by filling our minds with the things of eternity. The mind is the wellspring of our actions, and our actions consequently reveal where our thinking process is. To fear God is to make Him first in our lives. Think about how easy, in one sense, it is to control your thoughts, at least when you are conscious that you need to control them. The problem is often that unless we make a conscious effort to dwell on the right things, the “things above, not . . . things on the earth” (Col. 3:2

**2 Think only about the things in heaven, not the things on earth.**

), our minds, fallen and sinful as they are, will naturally tend toward the base things, the things of the world. We therefore need to purposely and deliberately choose, using the sacred gift of free will, to dwell on the heavenly things as Paul said. “Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Phil. 4:8

**8 Brothers and sisters, think about the things that are good and worthy of praise. Think about the things that are true and honorable and right and pure and beautiful and respected.**

). A study of the use of the phrase in the Old Testament “to give glory to God” shows that, interestingly enough, it often, though not always, appears in the context of divine judgment (Josh. 7:19

**19 Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, tell the truth. Confess to the Lord, the God of Israel. Tell me what you did, and don’t try to hide anything from me.”**

; 1 Sam. 6:5

**5 Make models of the growths and the rats that are ruining the country, and give honor to Israel’s God. Then maybe he will stop being so hard on you, your gods, and your land.**

; Jer. 13:15

**Threat of Slavery 15  Listen and pay attention. Don’t be too proud, because the Lord has spoken to you.**

, 16

**16  Give glory to the Lord your God before he brings darkness and before you slip and fall on the dark hills. You hope for light, but he will turn it into thick darkness; he will change it into deep gloom.**

; Mal. 2:2

**2 Listen to me. Pay attention to what I say. Honor my name,” says the Lord All-Powerful. “If you don’t, I will send a curse on you and on your blessings. I have already cursed them, because you don’t pay attention to what I say.**

), just as it does in the first angel’s message (Rev. 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

). This idea is also seen in Revelation 19:1

**People in Heaven Praise God 19 After this vision and announcement I heard what sounded like a great many people in heaven saying: “Hallelujah! n Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God,**

, 2

**2  because his judgments are true and right. He has punished the prostitute who made the earth evil with her sexual sin. He has paid her back for the death of his servants.”**

: “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments.” According to the apostle Paul, our bodies are a sanctuary, the dwelling place of the Spirit of God, a temple made holy by His presence. The Scriptures call us in no uncertain terms to glorify God in every aspect of our lives. When God is the center of our lives, our one desire is to give glory to Him, whether with our diet, dress, entertainment, or interactions with others. We glorify God as we reveal His character of love to the world through our commitment to doing His will. This is even more important in light of earth’s end-time judgment. In Romans 12:1

**Give Your Lives to God 12 So brothers and sisters, since God has shown us great mercy, I beg you to offer your lives as a living sacrifice to him. Your offering must be only for God and pleasing to him, which is the spiritual way for you to worship.**

, 2

**2 Do not be shaped by this world; instead be changed within by a new way of thinking. Then you will be able to decide what God wants for you; you will know what is good and pleasing to him and what is perfect.**

, the Greek word for bodies is somata, which is better translated as the collective sum of who you are—body, mind, and emotions. The J. B. Phillips translation of the Bible translates the phrase “reasonable service” as an “act of intelligent worship.” In other words, when you make a total commitment to “fear God” and “glorify Him” in all you do, giving your mind, body, and emotions to Him, it is an act of intelligent worship. And indeed, in light of God’s judgment, taking heed and obeying is a good idea. Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?What can you do to make sure you are indeed glorifying God with your body, mind, and emotions?

inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Revelation 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

, 12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

? Genesis 22:12

**12 The angel said, “Don’t kill your son or hurt him in any way. Now I can see that you trust God and that you have not kept your son, your only son, from me.”**

Ecclesiastes 12:13

**13  Now, everything has been heard, so I give my final advice: Honor God and obey his commands, because this is all people must do.**

, 14

**14  God will judge everything, even what is done in secret, the good and the evil.**

Colossians 3:1

**Your New Life in Christ 3 Since you were raised from the dead with Christ, aim at what is in heaven, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.**

, 2

**2 Think only about the things in heaven, not the things on earth.**

Hebrews 12:1

**Follow Jesus’ Example 12 We are surrounded by a great cloud of people whose lives tell us what faith means. So let us run the race that is before us and never give up. We should remove from our lives anything that would get in the way and the sin that so easily holds us back.**

, 2

**2 Let us look only to Jesus, the One who began our faith and who makes it perfect. He suffered death on the cross. But he accepted the shame as if it were nothing because of the joy that God put before him. And now he is sitting at the right side of God’s throne.**

1 Corinthians 3:16

**16 Don’t you know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?**

, 17

**17 If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person, because God’s temple is holy and you are that temple.**

Matthew 6:33

**33 Seek first God’s kingdom and what God wants. Then all your other needs will be met as well.**

1 Corinthians 6:19

**19 You should know that your body is a temple for the Holy Spirit who is in you. You have received the Holy Spirit from God. So you do not belong to yourselves,**

, 20

**20 because you were bought by God for a price. So honor God with your bodies.**

; 10:31

**31 The answer is, if you eat or drink, or if you do anything, do it all for the glory of God.**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

, 12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

?

inVite

The Faith of Jesus  
“Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

). This is the depiction of God’s faithful people in the last days. Yet the only way anyone can keep the commandments of God, then and now, is through the faith of Jesus. Notice our text does not say “faith in Jesus.” Although that, too, is extremely important, this expression, “the faith of Jesus,” is something more. It is the quality of faith that enabled Christ to be victorious over Satan’s fiercest temptations. Faith is a gift given to each believer. When we exercise the faith that the Holy Spirit puts in our hearts, that faith grows. We overcome not by our willpower but by the power of the living Christ working through us. We overcome not because of who we are but because of who He is. We can overcome because He overcame. We can be victorious because He was victorious. We can triumph over temptation because He triumphed over temptation. Jesus, the divine Son of God, has overcome the wiles of the devil. He faced temptation trusting in the promises of God, surrendering His will to the Father’s and depending on the Father’s power. Trusting Him, looking to Him, believing in Him, we too can be victorious. Jesus is our all in all, and the three angels’ messages are all about Him. Revelation’s message is one of victory, not defeat. It speaks of a people who through His grace and by His power overcome. The word “overcome” in one form or another is used 11 times in the book of Revelation. In the vision of the seven churches that represent the Christian church from the first century to our time, there are believers in every generation who John says “overcame.” At the end time, those who “overcome” inherit all things (see Rev. 21:7

**7 Those who win the victory will receive this, and I will be their God, and they will be my children.**

). This is not legalism. It is victory through Jesus Christ, whose perfect life of perfect righteousness and that alone is what gives us the promise of eternal life. It is faith in action. It is transforming, life-changing, miraculous grace in the life of the believer. Journal: Meditate on Revelation 14 again and look for where Jesus is.What are things in your life that you desire to overcome? How do you see Jesus differently in light of this week’s lesson?

inSight

Overcoming as He Overcame  
Unless the sacred word is appreciated, it will not be obeyed as a sure and safe and precious textbook. Every besetting sin must be put away. Warfare must be waged against it until it is overcome. The Lord will work with your efforts. As finite, sinful man works out his own salvation with fear and trembling, it is God who works in him, to will and to do of His own good pleasure. But God will not work without the cooperation of man. He must exercise his powers to the very utmost; he must place himself as an apt, willing student in the school of Christ; and as he accepts the grace that is freely offered to him, the presence of Christ in the thought and in the heart will give him decision of purpose to lay aside every weight of sin, that the heart may be filled with all the fullness of God, and of His love. (Ellen G. White, Fundamentals of Christian Education [Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1923], 134.) Ample provision has been made for all who sincerely, earnestly, and thoughtfully set about the work of perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Strength and grace have been provided through Christ, to be brought by ministering angels to the heirs of salvation. None are so low, so corrupt and vile, that they cannot find in Jesus, who died for them, strength and purity and righteousness, if they will put away their sins, turn from their course of iniquity, and with full purpose of heart seek the living God. He is waiting to take away their stained garments, polluted by sin, and to put upon them the pure robe of His righteousness, to bid them live and not die. In Him, as branches of the Living Vine, they may flourish. Their boughs will not wither nor be fruitless. If they abide in Him, they can draw nourishment from Him, be imbued with His Spirit, walk as He walked, overcome as He overcame, and be exalted to His own right hand. (Ellen G. White, Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene [Battle Creek, Mich.: Good Health Publishing Company, 1890], 140.) The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Those who overcome as Christ overcame will need to constantly guard themselves against the temptations of Satan. The appetite and passions should be restricted and under the control of enlightened conscience, that the intellect may be unimpaired, the perceptive powers clear, so that the workings of Satan and his snares may not be interpreted to be the providence of God. Many desire the final reward and victory which are to be given to overcomers, but are not willing to endure toil, privation, and denial of self, as did their Redeemer. It is only through obedience and continual effort that we shall overcome as Christ overcame. (Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1872], vol. 3, 491.) Fearing God—how little of it there is! . . . There are those who will be like the men who helped to build the ark. They hear the truth; they have every advantage to become men of moral worth, yet they will not choose the good society, but the corrupt. If there is an influence that is not heavenly, they will gather to their side and unite with them, and although they act a part in the preparation of the truth which is to fit a people to stand in the day of the Lord, they will perish in the general ruin like Noah’s carpenters who helped to build the ark. God help you that you may not be of that class. (Ellen G. White letter 36, 1887, in Ellen G. White, Manuscript Releases [Silver Spring, Md.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1993], vol. 18, 261.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, what are some honest decisions you are struggling with?What are some honest decisions you must make in your school, family, workplace, and church?Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

How do we balance the gravity of last-day events with the necessity to live life abundantly?What has your own experience of fearing God been?What hinders us today from encountering the real Jesus Christ of Scripture?Think about the incredible power of the One who created and sustains the entire cosmos. Think about how much greater and more powerful He is than we are. How do these facts help us understand the idea of the “fear of God” and what it means? How can we avoid legalism when we discuss the biblical concepts of holiness, overcoming, and victory?Why must we understand that it was Christ’s victory for us at the cross that alone remains the foundation of our hope of salvation, regardless of our victories (or even failures) here and now?With all the promises of victory over sin, why do we often find ourselves failing to live up to the standard Jesus modeled for us and promised could be our experience as well?What mistakes are we making that don’t allow Christ to do His work? What does that look like in everyday life?How can we translate our spiritual desires into action?What practical steps can we take to be one of Revelation’s “overcomers”?

THE GOOD NEWS OF THE JUDGMENT

inTro

Looking Forward to Judgment  
Read This Week’s Passage: Deuteronomy Daniel 7

**These are the words which Moses spake unto all Israel beyond the Jordan in the wilderness, in the Arabah over against Suph, between Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Di-zahab.It is eleven days’ from Horeb by the way of mount Seir unto Kadesh-barnea.And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, that Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that Jehovah had given him in commandment unto them;after he had smitten Sihon the king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who dwelt in Ashtaroth, at Edrei.Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses to declare this law, saying,Jehovah our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mountain:turn you, and take your journey, and go to the hill-country of the Amorites, and unto all nigh thereunto, in the Arabah, in the hill-country, and in the lowland, and in the South, and by the sea-shore, the land of the Canaanites, and Lebanon, as far as the great river, the river Euphrates.Behold, I have set the land before you: go in and possess the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give unto them and to their seed after them.And I spake unto you at that time, saying, I am not able to bear you myself alone:Jehovah your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.Jehovah, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you!How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?Take you wise men, and understanding, and known, according to your tribes, and I will make them heads over you.And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good to do.So I took the heads of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, and captains of fifties, and captains of tens, and officers, according to your tribes.And I charged your judges at that time, saying, Hear between your brethren, and judge righteously between a man and his brother, and the sojourner that is with him.Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; ye shall hear the small and the great alike; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s: and the cause that is too hard for you ye shall bring unto me, and I will hear it.And I commanded you at that time all the things which ye should do.And we journeyed from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which ye saw, by the way to the hill-country of the Amorites, as Jehovah our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh-barnea.And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the hill-country of the Amorites, which Jehovah our God giveth unto us.Behold, Jehovah thy God hath set the land before thee: go up, take possession, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath spoken unto thee; fear not, neither be dismayed.And ye came near unto me every one of you, and said, Let us send men before us, that they may search the land for us, and bring us word again of the way by which we must go up, and the cities unto which we shall come.And the thing pleased me well; and I took twelve men of you, one man for every tribe:and they turned and went up into the hill-country, and came unto the valley of Eshcol, and spied it out.And they took of the fruit of the land in their hands, and brought it down unto us, and brought us word again, and said, It is a good land which Jehovah our God giveth unto us.Yet ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your God:and ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because Jehovah hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.Whither are we going up? our brethren have made our heart to melt, saying, The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakim there.Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them.Jehovah your God who goeth before you, he will fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes,and in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that Jehovah thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came unto this place.Yet in this thing ye did not believe Jehovah your God,who went before you in the way, to seek you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to show you by what way ye should go, and in the cloud by day.And Jehovah heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, and sware, saying,Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see the good land, which I sware to give unto your fathers,save Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it; and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath wholly followed Jehovah.Also Jehovah was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither:Joshua the son of Nun, who standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage thou him; for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.Moreover your little ones, that ye said should be a prey, and your children, that this day have no knowledge of good or evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.But as for you, turn you, and take your journey into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea.Then ye answered and said unto me, We have sinned against Jehovah, we will go up and fight, according to all that Jehovah our God commanded us. And ye girded on every man his weapons of war, and were forward to go up into the hill-country.And Jehovah said unto me, Say unto them, Go not up, neither fight; for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies.So I spake unto you, and ye hearkened not; but ye rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah, and were presumptuous, and went up into the hill-country.And the Amorites, that dwelt in that hill-country, came out against you, and chased you, as bees do, and beat you down in Seir, even unto Hormah.And ye returned and wept before Jehovah; but Jehovah hearkened not to your voice, nor gave ear unto you.So ye abode in Kadesh many days, according unto the days that ye abode.Then we turned, and took our journey into the wilderness by the way to the Red Sea, as Jehovah spake unto me; and we compassed mount Seir many days.And Jehovah spake unto me, saying,Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward.And command thou the people, saying, Ye are to pass through the border of your brethren the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir; and they will be afraid of you. Take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore;contend not with them; for I will not give you of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on; because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.Ye shall purchase food of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink.For Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee in all the work of thy hand; he hath known thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years Jehovah thy God hath been with thee; thou hast lacked nothing.So we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir, from the way of the Arabah from Elath and from Ezion-geber.  
And we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.And Jehovah said unto me, Vex not Moab, neither contend with them in battle; for I will not give thee of his land for a possession; because I have given Ar unto the children of Lot for a possession.( The Emim dwelt therein aforetime, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim:these also are accounted Rephaim, as the Anakim; but the Moabites call them Emim.The Horites also dwelt in Seir aforetime, but the children of Esau succeeded them; and they destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead; as Israel did unto the land of his possession, which Jehovah gave unto them).Now rise up, and get you over the brook Zered. And we went over the brook Zered.And the days in which we came from Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, were thirty and eight years; until all the generation of the men of war were consumed from the midst of the camp, as Jehovah sware unto them.Moreover the hand of Jehovah was against them, to destroy them from the midst of the camp, until they were consumed.So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people,that Jehovah spake unto me, saying,Thou art this day to pass over Ar, the border of Moab:and when thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, vex them not, nor contend with them; for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon for a possession; because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession.( That also is accounted a land of Rephaim: Rephaim dwelt therein aforetime; but the Ammonites call them Zamzummim,a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim; but Jehovah destroyed them before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead;as he did for the children of Esau, that dwell in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead even unto this day.And the Avvim, that dwelt in villages as far as Gaza, the Caphtorim, that came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.)Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the valley of the Arnon: behold, I have given into thy hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land; begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle.This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the peoples that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear the report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying,Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the highway, I will turn neither unto the right hand nor to the left.Thou shalt sell me food for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink: only let me pass through on my feet;as the children of Esau that dwell in Seir, and the Moabites that dwell in Ar, did unto me; until I shall pass over the Jordan into the land which Jehovah our God giveth us.But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him; for Jehovah thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as at this day.And Jehovah said unto me, Behold, I have begun to deliver up Sihon and his land before thee: begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land.Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, unto battle at Jahaz.And Jehovah our God delivered him up before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people.And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed every inhabited city, with the women and the little ones; we left none remaining:only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, with the spoil of the cities which we had taken.From Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, and the city that is in the valley, even unto Gilead, there was not a city too high for us; Jehovah our God delivered up all before us:only to the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not near; all the side of the river Jabbok, and the cities of the hill-country, and wheresoever Jehovah our God forbade us.Then we turned, and went up the way to Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, unto battle at Edrei.And Jehovah said unto me, Fear him not; for I have delivered him, and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon.So Jehovah our God delivered into our hand Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote him until none was left to him remaining.And we took all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we took not from them; threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.All these were cities fortified with high walls, gates, and bars; besides the unwalled towns a great many.And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying every inhabited city, with the women and the little ones.But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey unto ourselves.And we took the land at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites that were beyond the Jordan, from the valley of the Arnon unto mount Hermon( which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir);all the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan, unto Salecah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.( For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the Rephaim; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbah of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.)And this land we took in possession at that time: from Aroer, which is by the valley of the Arnon, and half the hill-country of Gilead, and the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites and to the Gadites:and the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half-tribe of Manasseh; all the region of Argob, even all Bashan. ( The same is called the land of Rephaim.Jair the son of Manasseh took all the region of Argob, unto the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and called them, even Bashan, after his own name, Havvoth-jair, unto this day.)And I gave Gilead unto Machir.And unto the Reubenites and unto the Gadites I gave from Gilead even unto the valley of the Arnon, the middle of the valley, and the border thereof, even unto the river Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon;the Arabah also, and the Jordan and the border thereof, from Chinnereth even unto the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, under the slopes of Pisgah eastward.And I commanded you at that time, saying, Jehovah your God hath given you this land to possess it: ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all the men of valor.But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle ( I know that ye have much cattle), shall abide in your cities which I have given you,until Jehovah give rest unto your brethren, as unto you, and they also possess the land which Jehovah your God giveth them beyond the Jordan: then shall ye return every man unto his possession, which I have given you.And I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that Jehovah your God hath done unto these two kings: so shall Jehovah do unto all the kingdoms whither thou goest over.Ye shall not fear them; for Jehovah your God, he it is that fighteth for you.And I besought Jehovah at that time, saying,O Lord Jehovah, thou hast begun to show thy servant thy greatness, and thy strong hand: for what god is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy mighty acts?Let me go over, I pray thee, and see the good land that is beyond the Jordan, that goodly mountain, and Lebanon.But Jehovah was wroth with me for your sakes, and hearkened not unto me; and Jehovah said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.Get thee up unto the top of Pisgah, and lift up thine eyes westward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.So we abode in the valley over against Beth-peor.And now, O Israel, hearken unto the statutes and unto the ordinances, which I teach you, to do them; that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, giveth you.Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it, that ye may keep the commandments of Jehovah your God which I command you.Your eyes have seen what Jehovah did because of Baal-peor; for all the men that followed Baal-peor, Jehovah thy God hath destroyed them from the midst of thee.But ye that did cleave unto Jehovah your God are alive every one of you this day.Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, even as Jehovah my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the midst of the land whither ye go in to possess it.Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, that shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.For what great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as Jehovah our God is whensoever we call upon him?And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and ordinances so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes saw, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but make them known unto thy children and thy children’s children;the day that thou stoodest before Jehovah thy God in Horeb, when Jehovah said unto me, Assemble me the people, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children.And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the heart of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness.And Jehovah spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of words, but ye saw no form; only ye a voice.And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.And Jehovah commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and ordinances, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it.Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of form on the day that Jehovah spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire;lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female,the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flieth in the heavens,the likeness of anything that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water under the earth;and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, thou be drawn away and worship them, and serve them, which Jehovah thy God hath allotted unto all the peoples under the whole heaven.But Jehovah hath taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as at this day.Furthermore Jehovah was angry with me for your sakes, and sware that I should not go over the Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance:but I must die in this land, I must not go over the Jordan; but ye shall go over, and possess that good land.Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of Jehovah your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image in the form of anything which Jehovah thy God hath forbidden thee.For Jehovah thy God is a devouring fire, a jealous God.When thou shalt beget children, and children’s children, and ye shall have been long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image in the form of anything, and shall do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah thy God, to provoke him to anger;I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over the Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.And Jehovah will scatter you among the peoples, and ye shall be left few in number among the nations, whither Jehovah shall lead you away.And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men’s hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.But from thence ye shall seek Jehovah thy God, and thou shalt find him, when thou searchest after him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, in the latter days thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and hearken unto his voice:for Jehovah thy God is a merciful God; he will not fail thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them.For ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from the one end of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it?Did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by trials, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by an outstretched arm, and by great terrors, according to all that Jehovah your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that Jehovah he is God; there is none else besides him.Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he made thee to see his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out with his presence, with his great power, out of Egypt;to drive out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as at this day.Know therefore this day, and lay it to thy heart, that Jehovah he is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is none else.And thou shalt keep his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days in the land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, for ever.Then Moses set apart three cities beyond the Jordan toward the sunrising;that the manslayer might flee thither, that slayeth his neighbor unawares, and hated him not in time past; and that fleeing unto one of these cities he might live:namely, Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country, for the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead, for the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan, for the Manassites.And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel:these are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, when they came forth out of Egypt,beyond the Jordan, in the valley over against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, when they came forth out of Egypt.And they took his land in possession, and the land of Og king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who were beyond the Jordan toward the sunrising;from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, even unto mount Sion ( the same is Hermon),and all the Arabah beyond the Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the Arabah, under the slopes of Pisgah.And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and observe to do them.Jehovah our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.Jehovah made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.Jehovah spake with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire( I stood between Jehovah and you at that time, to show you the word of Jehovah: for ye were afraid because of the fire, and went not up into the mount), saying,I am Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.Thou shalt have no other gods before me.Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, any likeness that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I, Jehovah, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me;and showing lovingkindness unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain: for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as Jehovah thy God commanded thee.Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work;but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou.And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.Honor thy father and thy mother, as Jehovah thy God commanded thee; that thy days may be long, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.Thou shalt not kill.Neither shalt thou commit adultery.Neither shalt thou steal.Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor.Neither shalt thou covet thy neighbor’s wife; neither shalt thou desire thy neighbor’s house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, his ox, or his ass, or anything that is thy neighbor’s.These words Jehovah spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them upon two tables of stone, and gave them unto me.And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders;and ye said, Behold, Jehovah our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth speak with man, and he liveth.Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of Jehovah our God any more, then we shall die.For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?Go thou near, and hear all that Jehovah our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that Jehovah our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it.And Jehovah heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and Jehovah said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!Go say to them, Return ye to your tents.But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess it.Ye shall observe to do therefore as Jehovah your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.Ye shall walk in all the way which Jehovah your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.Now this is the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to possess it;that thou mightest fear Jehovah thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged.Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath promised unto thee, in a land flowing with milk and honey.Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah:and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart;and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes.And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.And it shall be, when Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee, great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not,and houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and cisterns hewn out, which thou hewedst not, vineyards and olive-trees, which thou plantedst not, and thou shalt eat and be full;then beware lest thou forget Jehovah, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God; and him shalt thou serve, and shalt swear by his name.Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples that are round about you;for Jehovah thy God in the midst of thee is a jealous God; lest the anger of Jehovah thy God be kindled against thee, and he destroy thee from off the face of the earth.Ye shall not tempt Jehovah your God, as ye tempted him in Massah.Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of Jehovah your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of Jehovah; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers,to thrust out all thine enemies from before thee, as Jehovah hath spoken.When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which Jehovah our God hath commanded you?then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh’s bondmen in Egypt: and Jehovah brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand;and Jehovah showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his house, before our eyes;and he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.And Jehovah commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Jehovah our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as at this day.And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe to do all this commandment before Jehovah our God, as he hath commanded us.When Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and shall cast out many nations before thee, the Hittite, and the Girgashite, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;and when Jehovah thy God shall deliver them up before thee, and thou shalt smite them; then thou shalt utterly destroy them: thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them;neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.For he will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and he will destroy thee quickly.But thus shall ye deal with them: ye shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and hew down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire.For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth.Jehovah did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples:but because Jehovah loveth you, and because he would keep the oath which he sware unto your fathers, hath Jehovah brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.Know therefore that Jehovah thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and lovingkindness with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations,and repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.Thou shalt therefore keep the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command thee this day, to do them.And it shall come to pass, because ye hearken to these ordinances, and keep and do them, that Jehovah thy God will keep with thee the covenant and the lovingkindness which he sware unto thy fathers:and he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee; he will also bless the fruit of thy body and the fruit of thy ground, thy grain and thy new wine and thine oil, the increase of thy cattle and the young of thy flock, in the land which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee.Thou shalt be blessed above all peoples: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.And Jehovah will take away from thee all sickness; and none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, will he put upon thee, but will lay them upon all them that hate thee.And thou shalt consume all the peoples that Jehovah thy God shall deliver unto thee; thine eye shall not pity them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that will be a snare unto thee.If thou shalt say in thy heart, These nations are more than I; how can I dispossess them?thou shalt not be afraid of them: thou shalt well remember what Jehovah thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt;the great trials which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the outstretched arm, whereby Jehovah thy God brought thee out: so shall Jehovah thy God do unto all the peoples of whom thou art afraid.Moreover Jehovah thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves, perish from before thee.Thou shalt not be affrighted at them; for Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a great God and a terrible.And Jehovah thy God will cast out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.But Jehovah thy God will deliver them up before thee, and will discomfit them with a great discomfiture, until they be destroyed.And he will deliver their kings into thy hand, and thou shalt make their name to perish from under heaven: there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them.The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not covet the silver or the gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to Jehovah thy God.And thou shalt not bring an abomination into thy house, and become a devoted thing like unto it: thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a devoted thing.All the commandment which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers.And thou shalt remember all the way which Jehovah thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or not.And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live.Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.And thou shalt consider in thy heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so Jehovah thy God chasteneth thee.And thou shalt keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.For Jehovah thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills;a land of wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey;a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig copper.And thou shalt eat and be full, and thou shalt bless Jehovah thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.Beware lest thou forget Jehovah thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his ordinances, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:lest, when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget Jehovah thy God, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage;who led thee through the great and terrible wilderness, fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty ground where was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not; that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end:and lest thou say in thy heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.But thou shalt remember Jehovah thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth; that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as at this day.And it shall be, if thou shalt forget Jehovah thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.As the nations that Jehovah maketh to perish before you, so shall ye perish; because ye would not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah your God.Hear, O Israel: thou art to pass over the Jordan this day, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fortified up to heaven,a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the sons of Anak?Know therefore this day, that Jehovah thy God is he who goeth over before thee as a devouring fire; he will destroy them, and he will bring them down before thee: so shalt thou drive them out, and make them to perish quickly, as Jehovah hath spoken unto thee.Speak not thou in thy heart, after that Jehovah thy God hath thrust them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness Jehovah hath brought me in to possess this land; whereas for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah doth drive them out from before thee.Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thy heart, dost thou go in to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may establish the word which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.Know therefore, that Jehovah thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.Remember, forget thou not, how thou provokedst Jehovah thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou wentest forth out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against Jehovah.Also in Horeb ye provoked Jehovah to wrath, and Jehovah was angry with you to destroy you.When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which Jehovah made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water.And Jehovah delivered unto me the two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them according to all the words, which Jehovah spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly.And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that Jehovah gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant.And Jehovah said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people that thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.Furthermore Jehovah spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount was burning with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands.And I looked, and, behold, ye had sinned against Jehovah your God; ye had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which Jehovah had commanded you.And I took hold of the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and brake them before your eyes.And I fell down before Jehovah, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water; because of all your sin which ye sinned, in doing that which was evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger.For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith Jehovah was wroth against you to destroy you. But Jehovah hearkened unto me that time also.And Jehovah was very angry with Aaron to destroy him: and I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.And I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, grinding it very small, until it was as fine as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.And at Taberah, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah, ye provoked Jehovah to wrath.And when Jehovah sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then ye rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your God, and ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.Ye have been rebellious against Jehovah from the day that I knew you.So I fell down before Jehovah the forty days and forty nights that I fell down, because Jehovah had said he would destroy you.And I prayed unto Jehovah, and said, O Lord Jehovah, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, that thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, that thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand.Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin,lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say, Because Jehovah was not able to bring them into the land which he promised unto them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness.Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy great power and by thine outstretched arm.At that time Jehovah said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood.And I will write on the tables the words that were on the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark.So I made an ark of acacia wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in my hand.And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which Jehovah spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and Jehovah gave them unto me.And I turned and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they are as Jehovah commanded me.( And the children of Israel journeyed from Beeroth Bene-jaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died, and there he was buried; and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest’s office in his stead.From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of brooks of water.At that time Jehovah set apart the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, to stand before Jehovah to minister unto him, and to bless in his name, unto this day.Wherefore Levi hath no portion nor inheritance with his brethren; Jehovah is his inheritance, according as Jehovah thy God spake unto him.)And I stayed in the mount, as at the first time, forty days and forty nights: and Jehovah hearkened unto me that time also; Jehovah would not destroy thee.And Jehovah said unto me, Arise, take thy journey before the people; and they shall go in and possess the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give unto them.And now, Israel, what doth Jehovah thy God require of thee, but to fear Jehovah thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,to keep the commandments of Jehovah, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?Behold, unto Jehovah thy God belongeth heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that is therein.Only Jehovah had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all peoples, as at this day.Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.For Jehovah your God, he is God of gods, and Lord of lords, the great God, the mighty, and the terrible, who regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.He doth execute justice for the fatherless and widow, and loveth the sojourner, in giving him food and raiment.Love ye therefore the sojourner; for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt.Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God; him shalt thou serve; and to him shalt thou cleave, and by his name shalt thou swear.He is thy praise, and he is thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now Jehovah thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude.Therefore thou shalt love Jehovah thy God, and keep his charge, and his statutes, and his ordinances, and his commandments, alway.And know ye this day: for not with your children that have not known, and that have not seen the chastisement of Jehovah your God, his greatness, his mighty hand, and his outstretched arm,and his signs, and his works, which he did in the midst of Egypt unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land;and what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots; how he made the water of the Red Sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and how Jehovah hath destroyed them unto this day;and what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came unto this place;and what he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben; how the earth opened its mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and every living thing that followed them, in the midst of all Israel:but your eyes have seen all the great work of Jehovah which he did.Therefore shall ye keep all the commandment which I command thee this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go over to possess it;and that ye may prolong your days in the land, which Jehovah sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land flowing with milk and honey.For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs;but the land, whither ye go over to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, drinketh water of the rain of heaven,a land which Jehovah thy God careth for: the eyes of Jehovah thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love Jehovah your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,that I will give the rain of your land in its season, the former rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy grain, and thy new wine, and thine oil.And I will give grass in thy fields for thy cattle, and thou shalt eat and be full.Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;and the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and he shut up the heavens, so that there shall be no rain, and the land shall not yield its fruit; and ye perish quickly from off the good land which Jehovah giveth you.Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul; and ye shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes.And ye shall teach them your children, talking of them, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates;that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which Jehovah sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of the heavens above the earth.For if ye shall diligently keep all this commandment which I command you, to do it, to love Jehovah your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;then will Jehovah drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves.Every place whereon the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the hinder sea shall be your border.There shall no man be able to stand before you: Jehovah your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath spoken unto you.Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse:the blessing, if ye shall hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, which I command you this day;and the curse, if ye shall not hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known.And it shall come to pass, when Jehovah thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt set the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal.Are they not beyond the Jordan, behind the way of the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites that dwell in the Arabah, over against Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh?For ye are to pass over the Jordan to go in to possess the land which Jehovah your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein.And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and the ordinances which I set before you this day.These are the statutes and the ordinances which ye shall observe to do in the land which Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath given thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth.Ye shall surely destroy all the places wherein the nations that ye shall dispossess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree:and ye shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and burn their Asherim with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods; and ye shall destroy their name out of that place.Ye shall not do so unto Jehovah your God.But unto the place which Jehovah your God shall choose out of all your tribes, to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come;and thither ye shall bring your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and the heave-offering of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill-offerings, and the firstlings of your herd and of your flock:and there ye shall eat before Jehovah your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee.Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes;for ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.But when ye go over the Jordan, and dwell in the land which Jehovah your God causeth you to inherit, and he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety;then it shall come to pass that to the place which Jehovah your God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring all that I command you: your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave-offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto Jehovah.And ye shall rejoice before Jehovah your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and the Levite that is within your gates, forasmuch as he hath no portion nor inheritance with you.Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest;but in the place which Jehovah shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.Notwithstanding, thou mayest kill and eat flesh within all thy gates, after all the desire of thy soul, according to the blessing of Jehovah thy God which he hath given thee: the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the gazelle, and as of the hart.Only ye shall not eat the blood; thou shalt pour it out upon the earth as water.Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy grain, or of thy new wine, or of thine oil, or the firstlings of thy herd or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill-offerings, nor the heave-offering of thy hand;but thou shalt eat them before Jehovah thy God in the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God in all that thou puttest thy hand unto.Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest in thy land.When Jehovah thy God shall enlarge thy border, as he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, I will eat flesh, because thy soul desireth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, after all the desire of thy soul.If the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to put his name there, be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which Jehovah hath given thee, as I have commanded thee; and thou mayest eat within thy gates, after all the desire of thy soul.Even as the gazelle and as the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat thereof: the unclean and the clean may eat thereof alike.Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou shalt not eat the life with the flesh.Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it out upon the earth as water.Thou shalt not eat it; that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the eyes of Jehovah.Only thy holy things which thou hast, and thy vows, thou shalt take, and go unto the place which Jehovah shall choose;and thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah thy God; and the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah thy God; and thou shalt eat the flesh.Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the eyes of Jehovah thy God.When Jehovah thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest in to dispossess them, and thou dispossessest them, and dwellest in their land;take heed to thyself that thou be not ensnared to follow them, after that they are destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How do these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.Thou shalt not do so unto Jehovah thy God: for every abomination to Jehovah, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters do they burn in the fire to their gods.What thing soever I command you, that shall ye observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.If there arise in the midst of thee a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and he give thee a sign or a wonder,and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or unto that dreamer of dreams: for Jehovah your God proveth you, to know whether ye love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul.Ye shall walk after Jehovah your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death, because he hath spoken rebellion against Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage, to draw thee aside out of the way which Jehovah thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, that is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers;of the gods of the peoples that are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth;thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him:but thou shalt surely kill him; thy hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.And thou shalt stone him to death with stones, because he hath sought to draw thee away from Jehovah thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is in the midst of thee.If thou shalt hear tell concerning one of thy cities, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee to dwell there, saying,Certain base fellows are gone out from the midst of thee, and have drawn away the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known;then shalt thou inquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and, behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in the midst of thee,thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword.And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, unto Jehovah thy God: and it shall be a heap for ever; it shall not be built again.And there shall cleave nought of the devoted thing to thy hand; that Jehovah may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and show thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers;when thou shalt hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do that which is right in the eyes of Jehovah thy God.Ye are the children of Jehovah your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, and Jehovah hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth.Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing.These are the beasts which ye may eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat,the hart, and the gazelle, and the roebuck, and the wild goat, and the pygarg, and the antelope, and the chamois.And every beast that parteth the hoof, and hath the hoof cloven in two, cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that may ye eat.Nevertheless these ye shall not eat of them that chew the cud, or of them that have the hoof cloven: the camel, and the hare, and the coney; because they chew the cud but part not the hoof, they are unclean unto you.And the swine, because he parteth the hoof but cheweth not the cud, he is unclean unto you: of their flesh ye shall not eat, and their carcasses ye shall not touch.These ye may eat of all that are in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales may ye eat;and whatsoever hath not fins and scales ye shall not eat; it is unclean unto you.Of all clean birds ye may eat.But these are they of which ye shall not eat: the eagle, and the gier-eagle, and the ospray,and the glede, and the falcon, and the kite after its kind,and every raven after its kind,and the ostrich, and the night-hawk, and the sea-mew, and the hawk after its kind,the little owl, and the great owl, and the horned owl,and the pelican, and the vulture, and the cormorant,and the stork, and the heron after its kind, and the hoopoe, and the bat.And all winged creeping things are unclean unto you: they shall not be eaten.Of all clean birds ye may eat.Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself: thou mayest give it unto the sojourner that is within thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto a foreigner: for thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God. Thou shalt not boil a kid in its mother’s milk.Thou shalt surely tithe all the increase of thy seed, that which cometh forth from the field year by year.And thou shalt eat before Jehovah thy God, in the place which he shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there, the tithe of thy grain, of thy new wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herd and of thy flock; that thou mayest learn to fear Jehovah thy God always.And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it, because the place is too far from thee, which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to set his name there, when Jehovah thy God shall bless thee;then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thy hand, and shalt go unto the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose:and thou shalt bestow the money for whatsoever thy soul desireth, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul asketh of thee; and thou shalt eat there before Jehovah thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thy household.And the Levite that is within thy gates, thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee.At the end of every three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase in the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates:and the Levite, because he hath no portion nor inheritance with thee, and the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hand which thou doest.At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release that which he hath lent unto his neighbor; he shall not exact it of his neighbor and his brother; because Jehovah’s release hath been proclaimed.Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it: but whatsoever of thine is with thy brother thy hand shall release.Howbeit there shall be no poor with thee ( for Jehovah will surely bless thee in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it),if only thou diligently hearken unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to observe to do all this commandment which I command thee this day.For Jehovah thy God will bless thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over thee.If there be with thee a poor man, one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates in thy land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy poor brother;but thou shalt surely open thy hand unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need which he wanteth.Beware that there be not a base thought in thy heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou give him nought; and he cry unto Jehovah against thee, and it be sin unto thee.Thou shalt surely give him, and thy heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing Jehovah thy God will bless thee in all thy work, and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto.For the poor will never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt surely open thy hand unto thy brother, to thy needy, and to thy poor, in thy land.If thy brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.And when thou lettest him go free from thee, thou shalt not let him go empty:thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy threshing-floor, and out of thy winepress; as Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to-day.And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go out from thee; because he loveth thee and thy house, because he is well with thee;then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maid-servant thou shalt do likewise.It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou lettest him go free from thee; for to the double of the hire of a hireling hath he served thee six years: and Jehovah thy God will bless thee in all that thou doest.All the firstling males that are born of thy herd and of thy flock thou shalt sanctify unto Jehovah thy God: thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy herd, nor shear the firstling of thy flock.Thou shalt eat it before Jehovah thy God year by year in the place which Jehovah shall choose, thou and thy household.And if it have any blemish, lame or blind, any ill blemish whatsoever, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto Jehovah thy God.Thou shalt eat it within thy gates: the unclean and the clean alike, as the gazelle, and as the hart.Only thou shalt not eat the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it out upon the ground as water.Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto Jehovah thy God; for in the month of Abib Jehovah thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.And thou shalt sacrifice the passover unto Jehovah thy God, of the flock and the herd, in the place which Jehovah shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there.Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.And there shall be no leaven seen with thee in all thy borders seven days; neither shall any of the flesh, which thou sacrificest the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee;but at the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.And thou shalt roast and eat it in the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents.Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread; and on the seventh day shall be a solemn assembly to Jehovah thy God; thou shalt do no work therein.Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: from the time thou beginnest to put the sickle to the standing grain shalt thou begin to number seven weeks.And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto Jehovah thy God with a tribute of a freewill-offering of thy hand, which thou shalt give, according as Jehovah thy God blesseth thee:and thou shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are in the midst of thee, in the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there.And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes.Thou shalt keep the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in from thy threshing-floor and from thy winepress:and thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite, and the sojourner, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy gates.Seven days shalt thou keep a feast unto Jehovah thy God in the place which Jehovah shall choose; because Jehovah thy God will bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the work of thy hands, and thou shalt be altogether joyful.Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose: in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before Jehovah empty:every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of Jehovah thy God which he hath given thee.Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, according to thy tribes; and they shall judge the people with righteous judgment.Thou shalt not wrest justice: thou shalt not respect persons; neither shalt thou take a bribe; for a bribe doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.That which is altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest live, and inherit the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.Thou shalt not plant thee an Asherah of any kind of tree beside the altar of Jehovah thy God, which thou shalt make thee.Neither shalt thou set thee up a pillar; which Jehovah thy God hateth.Thou shalt not sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God an ox, or a sheep, wherein is a blemish, anything evil; for that is an abomination unto Jehovah thy God.If there be found in the midst of thee, within any of thy gates which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that doeth that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah thy God, in transgressing his covenant,and hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, or the sun, or the moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded,and it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it; then shalt thou inquire diligently; and, behold, if it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel,then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, who hath done this evil thing, unto thy gates, even the man or the woman; and thou shalt stone them to death with stones.At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is to die be put to death; at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.The hand of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So thou shalt put away the evil from the midst of thee.If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates; then shalt thou arise, and get thee up unto the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose;and thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days: and thou shalt inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment.And thou shalt do according to the tenor of the sentence which they shall show thee from that place which Jehovah shall choose; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they shall teach thee:according to the tenor of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do; thou shalt not turn aside from the sentence which they shall show thee, to the right hand, nor to the left.And the man that doeth presumptuously, in not hearkening unto the priest that standeth to minister there before Jehovah thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel.And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.When thou art come unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are round about me;thou shalt surely set him king over thee, whom Jehovah thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee, who is not thy brother.Only he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he may multiply horses; forasmuch as Jehovah hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of before the priests the Levites:and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them;that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel.The priests the Levites, all the tribe of Levi, shall have no portion nor inheritance with Israel: they shall eat the offerings of Jehovah made by fire, and his inheritance.And they shall have no inheritance among their brethren: Jehovah is their inheritance, as he hath spoken unto them.And this shall be the priests’ due from the people, from them that offer a sacrifice, whether it be ox or sheep, that they shall give unto the priest the shoulder, and the two cheeks, and the maw.The first-fruits of thy grain, of thy new wine, and of thine oil, and the first of the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him.For Jehovah thy God hath chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of Jehovah, him and his sons for ever.And if a Levite come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourneth, and come with all the desire of his soul unto the place which Jehovah shall choose;then he shall minister in the name of Jehovah his God, as all his brethren the Levites do, who stand there before Jehovah.They shall have like portions to eat, besides that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony.When thou art come into the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.There shall not be found with thee any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, one that useth divination, one that practiseth augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer,or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer.For whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto Jehovah: and because of these abominations Jehovah thy God doth drive them out from before thee.Thou shalt be perfect with Jehovah thy God.For these nations, that thou shalt dispossess, hearken unto them that practise augury, and unto diviners; but as for thee, Jehovah thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.Jehovah thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;according to all that thou desiredst of Jehovah thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of Jehovah my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.And Jehovah said unto me, They have well said that which they have spoken.I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.But the prophet, that shall speak a word presumptuously in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.And if thou say in thy heart, How shall we know the word which Jehovah hath not spoken?when a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him.When Jehovah thy God shall cut off the nations, whose land Jehovah thy God giveth thee, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in their houses;thou shalt set apart three cities for thee in the midst of thy land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee to possess it.Thou shalt prepare thee the way, and divide the borders of thy land, which Jehovah thy God causeth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every manslayer may flee thither.And this is the case of the manslayer, that shall flee thither and live: whoso killeth his neighbor unawares, and hated him not in time past;as when a man goeth into the forest with his neighbor to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head slippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbor, so that he dieth; he shall flee unto one of these cities and live:lest the avenger of blood pursue the manslayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and smite him mortally; whereas he was not worthy of death, inasmuch as he hated him not in time past.Wherefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt set apart three cities for thee.And if Jehovah thy God enlarge thy border, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, and give thee all the land which he promised to give unto thy fathers;if thou shalt keep all this commandment to do it, which I command thee this day, to love Jehovah thy God, and to walk ever in his ways; then shalt thou add three cities more for thee, besides these three:that innocent blood be not shed in the midst of thy land, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and so blood be upon thee.But if any man hate his neighbor, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally so that he dieth, and he flee into one of these cities;then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die.Thine eye shall not pity him, but thou shalt put away the innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee.Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor’s landmark, which they of old time have set, in thine inheritance which thou shalt inherit, in the land that Jehovah thy God giveth thee to possess it.One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall a matter be established.If an unrighteous witness rise up against any man to testify against him of wrong-doing,then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before Jehovah, before the priests and the judges that shall be in those days;and the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and have testified falsely against his brother;then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to do unto his brother: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.And those that remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil in the midst of thee.And thine eyes shall not pity; life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.When thou goest forth to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, a people more than thou, thou shalt not be afraid of them; for Jehovah thy God is with thee, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.And it shall be, when ye draw nigh unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people,and shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye draw nigh this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint; fear not, nor tremble, neither be ye affrighted at them;for Jehovah your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.And what man is there that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not used the fruit thereof? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man use the fruit thereof.And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and faint-hearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren’s heart melt as his heart.And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall appoint captains of hosts at the head of the people.When thou drawest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that are found therein shall become tributary unto thee, and shall serve thee.And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:and when Jehovah thy God delivereth it into thy hand, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword:but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take for a prey unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which Jehovah thy God hath given thee.Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.But of the cities of these peoples, that Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth;but thou shalt utterly destroy them: the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; as Jehovah thy God hath commanded thee;that they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so would ye sin against Jehovah your God.When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by wielding an axe against them; for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down; for is the tree of the field man, that it should be besieged of thee?Only the trees of which thou knowest that they are not trees for food, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it fall.If one be found slain in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath smitten him;then thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall measure unto the cities which are round about him that is slain:and it shall be, that the city which is nearest unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take a heifer of the herd, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke;and the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a valley with running water, which is neither plowed nor sown, and shall break the heifer’s neck there in the valley.And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near; for them Jehovah thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of Jehovah; and according to their word shall every controversy and every stroke be.And all the elders of that city, who are nearest unto the slain man, shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley;and they shall answer and say, Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it.Forgive, O Jehovah, thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and suffer not innocent blood in the midst of thy people Israel. And the blood shall be forgiven them.So shalt thou put away the innocent blood from the midst of thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the eyes of Jehovah.When thou goest forth to battle against thine enemies, and Jehovah thy God delivereth them into thy hands, and thou carriest them away captive,and seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and thou hast a desire unto her, and wouldest take her to thee to wife;then thou shalt bring her home to thy house; and she shall shave her head, and pare her nails;and she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thy house, and bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not deal with her as a slave, because thou hast humbled her.If a man have two wives, the one beloved, and the other hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the first-born son be hers that was hated;then it shall be, in the day that he causeth his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved the first-born before the son of the hated, who is the first-born:but he shall acknowledge the first-born, the son of the hated, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath; for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the first-born is his.If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, that will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and, though they chasten him, will not hearken unto them;then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;and they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard.And all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree;his body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt surely bury him the same day; for he that is hanged is accursed of God; that thou defile not thy land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.Thou shalt not see thy brother’s ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely bring them again unto thy brother.And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then thou shalt bring it home to thy house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it to him.And so shalt thou do with his ass; and so shalt thou do with his garment; and so shalt thou do with every lost thing of thy brother’s, which he hath lost, and thou hast found: thou mayest not hide thyself.Thou shalt not see thy brother’s ass or his ox fallen down by the way, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again.A woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment; for whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto Jehovah thy God.If a bird’s nest chance to be before thee in the way, in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, thou shalt not take the dam with the young:thou shalt surely let the dam go, but the young thou mayest take unto thyself; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days.When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house, if any man fall from thence.Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest the whole fruit be forfeited, the seed which thou hast sown, and the increase of the vineyard.Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.Thou shalt not wear a mingled stuff, wool and linen together.Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four borders of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself.If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her,and lay shameful things to her charge, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came nigh to her, I found not in her the tokens of virginity;then shall the father of the damsel, and her mother, take and bring forth the tokens of the damsel’s virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate;and the damsel’s father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her;and, lo, he hath laid shameful things, saying, I found not in thy daughter the tokens of virginity; and yet these are the tokens of my daughter’s virginity. And they shall spread the garment before the elders of the city.And the elders of that city shall take the man and chastise him;and they shall fine him a hundred of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel: and she shall be his wife; he may not put her away all his days.But if this thing be true, that the tokens of virginity were not found in the damsel;then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father’s house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones, because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the harlot in her father’s house: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die, the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away the evil from Israel.If there be a damsel that is a virgin betrothed unto a husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her;then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them to death with stones; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbor’s wife: so thou shalt put away the evil from the midst of thee.But if the man find the damsel that is betrothed in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her; then the man only that lay with her shall die:but unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbor, and slayeth him, even so is this matter;for he found her in the field, the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her.If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, that is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel’s father fifty of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he hath humbled her; he may not put her away all his days.A man shall not take his father’s wife, and shall not uncover his father’s skirt.He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the assembly of Jehovah.A bastard shall not enter into the assembly of Jehovah; even to the tenth generation shall none of his enter into the assembly of Jehovah.An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of Jehovah; even to the tenth generation shall none belonging to them enter into the assembly of Jehovah for ever:because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt, and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor from Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.Nevertheless Jehovah thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but Jehovah thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because Jehovah thy God loved thee.Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days for ever.Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; because thou wast a sojourner in his land.The children of the third generation that are born unto them shall enter into the assembly of Jehovah.When thou goest forth in camp against thine enemies, then thou shalt keep thee from every evil thing.If there be among you any man, that is not clean by reason of that which chanceth him by night, then shall he go abroad out of the camp, he shall not come within the camp:but it shall be, when evening cometh on, he shall bathe himself in water; and when the sun is down, he shall come within the camp.Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad:and thou shalt have a paddle among thy weapons; and it shall be, when thou sittest down abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back and cover that which cometh from thee:for Jehovah thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy, that he may not see an unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.Thou shalt not deliver unto his master a servant that is escaped from his master unto thee:he shall dwell with thee, in the midst of thee, in the place which he shall choose within one of thy gates, where it pleaseth him best: thou shalt not oppress him.There shall be no prostitute of the daughters of Israel, neither shall there be a sodomite of the sons of Israel.Thou shalt not bring the hire of a harlot, or the wages of a dog, into the house of Jehovah thy God for any vow: for even both these are an abomination unto Jehovah thy God.Thou shalt not lend upon interest to thy brother; interest of money, interest of victuals, interest of anything that is lent upon interest.Unto a foreigner thou mayest lend upon interest; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon interest, that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all that thou puttest thy hand unto, in the land whither thou goest in to possess it.When thou shalt vow a vow unto Jehovah thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it: for Jehovah thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; according as thou hast vowed unto Jehovah thy God, a freewill-offering, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.When thou comest into thy neighbor’s vineyard, then thou mayest eat of grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel.When thou comest into thy neighbor’s standing grain, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thy hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor’s standing grain.When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man’s wife.And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, who took her to be his wife;her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before Jehovah: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.When a man taketh a new wife, he shall not go out in the host, neither shall he be charged with any business: he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer his wife whom he hath taken.No man shall take the mill or the upper millstone to pledge; for he taketh life to pledge.If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and he deal with him as a slave, or sell him; then that thief shall die: so shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and do according to all that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do.Remember what Jehovah thy God did unto Miriam, by the way as ye came forth out of Egypt.When thou dost lend thy neighbor any manner of loan, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge.Thou shalt stand without, and the man to whom thou dost lend shall bring forth the pledge without unto thee.And if he be a poor man, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge;thou shalt surely restore to him the pledge when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his garment, and bless thee: and it shall be righteousness unto thee before Jehovah thy God.Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates:in his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it ( for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it); lest he cry against thee unto Jehovah, and it be sin unto thee.The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.Thou shalt not wrest the justice to the sojourner, to the fatherless, nor take the widow’s raiment to pledge;but thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt, and Jehovah thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.When thou reapest thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hands.When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless, and for the widow.When thou gatherest thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it after thee: it shall be for the sojourner, for the fatherless, and for the widow.And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, and judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his wickedness, by number.Forty stripes he may give him, he shall not exceed; lest, if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee.Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out.If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no son, the wife of the dead shall not be married without unto a stranger: her husband’s brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of a husband’s brother unto her.And it shall be, that the first-born that she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother that is dead, that his name be not blotted out of Israel.And if the man like not to take his brother’s wife, then his brother’s wife shall go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband’s brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel; he will not perform the duty of a husband’s brother unto me.Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand, and say, I like not to take her;then shall his brother’s wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face; and she shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto the man that doth not build up his brother’s house.And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.When men strive together one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets;then thou shalt cut off her hand, thine eye shall have no pity.Thou shalt not have in thy bag diverse weights, a great and a small.Thou shalt not have in thy house diverse measures, a great and a small.A perfect and just weight shalt thou have; a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.For all that do such things, all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto Jehovah thy God.Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way as ye came forth out of Egypt;how he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.Therefore it shall be, when Jehovah thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget.And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein,that thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which thou shalt bring in from thy land that Jehovah thy God giveth thee; and thou shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which Jehovah thy God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there.And thou shalt come unto the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto Jehovah thy God, that I am come unto the land which Jehovah sware unto our fathers to give us.And the priest shall take the basket out of thy hand, and set it down before the altar of Jehovah thy God.And thou shalt answer and say before Jehovah thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father; and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there, few in number; and he became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous.And the Egyptians dealt ill with us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage:and we cried unto Jehovah, the God of our fathers, and Jehovah heard our voice, and saw our affliction, and our toil, and our oppression;and Jehovah brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders;and he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.And now, behold, I have brought the first of the fruit of the ground, which thou, O Jehovah, hast given me. And thou shalt set it down before Jehovah thy God, and worship before Jehovah thy God:and thou shalt rejoice in all the good which Jehovah thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thy house, thou, and the Levite, and the sojourner that is in the midst of thee.When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithe of thine increase in the third year, which is the year of tithing, then thou shalt give it unto the Levite, to the sojourner, to the fatherless, and to the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled.And thou shalt say before Jehovah thy God, I have put away the hallowed things out of my house, and also have given them unto the Levite, and unto the sojourner, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandment which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed any of thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them:I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I put away thereof, being unclean, nor given thereof for the dead: I have hearkened to the voice of Jehovah my God; I have done according to all that thou hast commanded me.Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the ground which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.This day Jehovah thy God commandeth thee to do these statutes and ordinances: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.Thou hast avouched Jehovah this day to be thy God, and that thou wouldest walk in his ways, and keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his ordinances, and hearken unto his voice:and Jehovah hath avouched thee this day to be a people for his own possession, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments;and to make thee high above all nations that he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor; and that thou mayest be a holy people unto Jehovah thy God, as he hath spoken.And Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandment which I command you this day.And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over the Jordan unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster:and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over; that thou mayest go in unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath promised thee.And it shall be, when ye are passed over the Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster.And there shalt thou build an altar unto Jehovah thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt lift up no iron upon them.Thou shalt build the altar of Jehovah thy God of unhewn stones; and thou shalt offer burnt-offerings thereon unto Jehovah thy God:and thou shalt sacrifice peace-offerings, and shalt eat there; and thou shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God.And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel, saying, Keep silence, and hearken, O Israel: This day thou art become the people of Jehovah thy God.Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day.And Moses charged the people the same day, saying,These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are passed over the Jordan: Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin.And these shall stand upon mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.And the Levites shall answer, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice,Cursed be the man that maketh a graven or molten image, an abomination unto Jehovah, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and setteth it up in secret. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen.Cursed be he that setteth light by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that wresteth the justice to the sojourner, fatherless, and widow. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that lieth with his father’s wife, because he hath uncovered his father’s skirt. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that lieth with any manner of beast. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that lieth with his mother-in-law. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that smiteth his neighbor in secret. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that taketh a bribe to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen.Cursed be he that confirmeth not the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to observe to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that Jehovah thy God will set thee on high above all the nations of the earth:and all these blessings shall come upon thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of Jehovah thy God.Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy beasts, the increase of thy cattle, and the young of thy flock.Blessed shall be thy basket and thy kneading-trough.Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.Jehovah will cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thee: they shall come out against thee one way, and shall flee before thee seven ways.Jehovah will command the blessing upon thee in thy barns, and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto; and he will bless thee in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee.Jehovah will establish thee for a holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee; if thou shalt keep the commandments of Jehovah thy God, and walk in his ways.And all the peoples of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of Jehovah; and they shall be afraid of thee.And Jehovah will make thee plenteous for good, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers to give thee.Jehovah will open unto thee his good treasure the heavens, to give the rain of thy land in its season, and to bless all the work of thy hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.And Jehovah will make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if thou shalt hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do,and shalt not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.Cursed shall be thy basket and thy kneading-trough.Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, the increase of thy cattle, and the young of thy flock.Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.Jehovah will send upon thee cursing, discomfiture, and rebuke, in all that thou puttest thy hand unto to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the evil of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.Jehovah will make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest in to possess it.Jehovah will smite thee with consumption, and with fever, and with inflammation, and with fiery heat, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish.And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron.Jehovah will make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.Jehovah will cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; thou shalt go out one way against them, and shalt flee seven ways before them: and thou shalt be tossed to and from among all the kingdoms of the earth.And thy dead body shall be food unto all birds of the heavens, and unto the beasts of the earth; and there shall be none to frighten them away.Jehovah will smite thee with the boil of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scurvy, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.Jehovah will smite thee with madness, and with blindness, and with astonishment of heart;and thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and robbed alway, and there shall be none to save thee.Thou shalt betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not use the fruit thereof.Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to save thee.Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people; and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day: and there shall be nought in the power of thy hand.The fruit of thy ground, and all thy labors, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway;so that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.Jehovah will smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore boil, whereof thou canst not be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the crown of thy head.Jehovah will bring thee, and thy king whom thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation that thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.And thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword, among all the peoples whither Jehovah shall lead thee away.Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather little in; for the locust shall consume it.Thou shalt plant vineyards and dress them, but thou shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather; for the worm shall eat them.Thou shalt have olive-trees throughout all thy borders, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast.Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be thine; for they shall go into captivity.All thy trees and the fruit of thy ground shall the locust possess.The sojourner that is in the midst of thee shall mount up above thee higher and higher; and thou shalt come down lower and lower.He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.And all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.Because thou servedst not Jehovah thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, by reason of the abundance of all things;therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies that Jehovah shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.Jehovah will bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;a nation of fierce countenance, that shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young,and shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy ground, until thou be destroyed; that also shall not leave thee grain, new wine, or oil, the increase of thy cattle, or the young of thy flock, until they have caused thee to perish.And they shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fortified walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land; and they shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which Jehovah thy God hath given thee.And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, whom Jehovah thy God hath given thee, in the siege and in the distress wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee.The man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children whom he hath remaining;so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat, because he hath nothing left him, in the siege and in the distress wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in all thy gates.The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter,and toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children whom she shall bear; for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly, in the siege and in the distress wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, JEHOVAH THY GOD;then Jehovah will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.And he will bring upon thee again all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of; and they shall cleave unto thee.Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will Jehovah bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; because thou didst not hearken unto the voice of Jehovah thy God.And it shall come to pass, that, as Jehovah rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you, so Jehovah will rejoice over you to cause you to perish, and to destroy you; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest in to possess it.And Jehovah will scatter thee among all peoples, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers, even wood and stone.And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, and there shall be no rest for the sole of thy foot: but Jehovah will give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and pining of soul;and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear night and day, and shalt have no assurance of thy life.In the morning thou shalt say, Would it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would it were morning! for the fear of thy heart which thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.And Jehovah will bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I said unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall sell yourselves unto your enemies for bondmen and for bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.These are the words of the covenant which Jehovah commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that Jehovah did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land;the great trials which thine eyes saw, the signs, and those great wonders:but Jehovah hath not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxed old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxed old upon thy foot.Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink; that ye may know that I am Jehovah your God.And when ye came unto this place, Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them:and we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half-tribe of the Manassites.Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.Ye stand this day all of you before Jehovah your God; your heads, your tribes, your elders, and your officers, even all the men of Israel,your little ones, your wives, and thy sojourner that is in the midst of thy camps, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water;that thou mayest enter into the covenant of Jehovah thy God, and into his oath, which Jehovah thy God maketh with thee this day;that he may establish thee this day unto himself for a people, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he spake unto thee, and as he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath,but with him that standeth here with us this day before Jehovah our God, and also with him that is not here with us this day( for ye know how we dwelt in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which ye passed;and ye have seen their abominations, and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which were among them);lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from Jehovah our God, to go to serve the gods of those nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood;and it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart, to destroy the moist with the dry.Jehovah will not pardon him, but then the anger of Jehovah and his jealousy will smoke against that man, and all the curse that is written in this book shall lie upon him, and Jehovah will blot out his name from under heaven.And Jehovah will set him apart unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant that is written in this book of the law.And the generation to come, your children that shall rise up after you, and the foreigner that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses wherewith Jehovah hath made it sick;the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, a burning, it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which Jehovah overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:even all the nations shall say, Wherefore hath Jehovah done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?Then men shall say, Because they forsook the covenant of Jehovah, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt,and went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods that they knew not, and that he had not given unto them:therefore the anger of Jehovah was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curse that is written in this book;and Jehovah rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as at this day.The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither Jehovah thy God hath driven thee,and shalt return unto Jehovah thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul;that then Jehovah thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples, whither Jehovah thy God hath scattered thee.If thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jehovah thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:and Jehovah thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.And Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.And Jehovah thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, that persecuted thee.And thou shalt return and obey the voice of Jehovah, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day.And Jehovah thy God will make thee plenteous in all the work of thy hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, for good: for Jehovah will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers;if thou shalt obey the voice of Jehovah thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law; if thou turn unto Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off.It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it?Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it?But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;in that I command thee this day to love Jehovah thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, that thou mayest live and multiply, and that Jehovah thy God may bless thee in the land whither thou goest in to possess it.But if thy heart turn away, and thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them;I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish; ye shall not prolong your days in the land, whither thou passest over the Jordan to go in to possess it.I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed;to love Jehovah thy God, to obey his voice, and to cleave unto him; for he is thy life, and the length of thy days; that thou mayest dwell in the land which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.And Moses went and spake these words unto all Israel.And he said unto them, I am a hundred and twenty years old this day; I can no more go out and come in: and Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou shalt not go over this Jordan.Jehovah thy God, he will go over before thee; he will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt dispossess them: Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as Jehovah hath spoken.And Jehovah will do unto them as he did to Sihon and to Og, the kings of the Amorites, and unto their land; whom he destroyed.And Jehovah will deliver them up before you, and ye shall do unto them according unto all the commandment which I have commanded you.Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be affrighted at them: for Jehovah thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of good courage: for thou shalt go with this people into the land which Jehovah hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.And Jehovah, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and unto all the elders of Israel.And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of seven years, in the set time of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,when all Israel is come to appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.Assemble the people, the men and the women and the little ones, and thy sojourner that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear Jehovah your God, and observe to do all the words of this law;and that their children, who have not known, may hear, and learn to fear Jehovah your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it.And Jehovah said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tent of meeting, that I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tent of meeting.And Jehovah appeared in the Tent in a pillar of cloud: and the pillar of cloud stood over the door of the Tent.And Jehovah said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and play the harlot after the strange gods of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them.Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall come upon them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evil which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach thou it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.For when I shall have brought them into the land which I sware unto their fathers, flowing with milk and honey, and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxed fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and despise me, and break my covenant.And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are come upon them, that this song shall testify before them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they frame this day, before I have brought them into the land which I sware.So Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel.And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I sware unto them: and I will be with thee.And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished,that Moses commanded the Levites, that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, saying,Take this book of the law, and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of Jehovah your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against Jehovah; and how much more after my death?Assemble unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and call heaven and earth to witness against them.For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.And Moses spake in the ears of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were finished.Give ear, ye heavens, and I will speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth.My doctrine shall drop as the rain; My speech shall distil as the dew, the small rain upon the tender grass, And as the showers upon the herb.For I will proclaim the name of Jehovah: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.The Rock, his work is perfect; For all his ways are justice: A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, Just and right is he.They have dealt corruptly with him, not his children, their blemish; a perverse and crooked generation.Do ye thus requite Jehovah, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? He hath made thee, and established thee.Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations: Ask thy father, and he will show thee; elders, and they will tell thee.When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, When he separated the children of men, He set the bounds of the peoples to the number of the children of Israel.For Jehovah’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.He found him in a desert land, And in the waste howling wilderness; He compassed him about, he cared for him, He kept him as the apple of his eye.As an eagle that stirreth up her nest, That fluttereth over her young, He spread abroad his wings, he took them, He bare them on his pinions.Jehovah alone did lead him, And there was no foreign god with him.He made him ride on the high places of the earth, And he did eat the increase of the field; And he made him to suck honey out of the rock, And oil out of the flinty rock;Butter of the herd, and milk of the flock, With fat of lambs, And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, With the finest of the wheat; And of the blood of the grape thou drankest wine.But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: fat, thou art grown thick, thou art become sleek; Then he forsook God who made him, And lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.They moved him to jealousy with strange gods; With abominations provoked they him to anger.They sacrificed unto demons, which no God, To gods that they knew not, To new that came up of late, your fathers dreaded not.Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, And hast forgotten God that gave thee birth.And Jehovah saw, and abhorred, Because of the provocation of his sons and his daughters.And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: For they are a very perverse generation, Children in whom is no faithfulness.They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; They have provoked me to anger with their vanities: And I will move them to jealousy with those that are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.For a fire is kindled in mine anger, And burneth unto the lowest Sheol, And devoureth the earth with its increase, And setteth on fire the foundations of the mountains.I will heap evils upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them:They wasted with hunger, and devoured with burning heat And bitter destruction; And the teeth of beasts will I send upon them, With the poison of crawling things of the dust.Without shall the sword bereave, And in the chambers terror; both young man and virgin, The suckling with the man of gray hairs.I said, I would scatter them afar, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men;Were it not that I feared the provocation of the enemy, Lest their adversaries should judge amiss, Lest they should say, Our hand is exalted, And Jehovah hath not done all this.For they are a nation void of counsel, And there is no understanding in them.Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, That they would consider their latter end!How should one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Except their Rock had sold them, And Jehovah had delivered them up?For their rock is not as our Rock, Even our enemies themselves being judges.For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, And of the fields of Gomorrah: Their grapes are grapes of gall, Their clusters are bitter:Their wine is the poison of serpents, And the cruel venom of asps.Is not this laid up in store with me, Sealed up among my treasures?Vengeance is mine, and recompense, At the time when their foot shall slide: For the day of their calamity is at hand, And the things that are to come upon them shall make haste.For Jehovah will judge his people, And repent himself for his servants; When he seeth that power is gone, And there is none remaining, shut up or left at large.And he will say, Where are their gods, The rock in which they took refuge;Which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, drank the wine of their drink-offering? Let them rise up and help you, Let them be your protection.See now that I, even I, am he, And there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal; And there is none that can deliver out of my hand.For I lift up my hand to heaven, And say, As I live for ever,If I whet my glittering sword, And my hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine adversaries, And will recompense them that hate me.I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, And my sword shall devour flesh; With the blood of the slain and the captives, From the head of the leaders of the enemy.Rejoice, O ye nations, his people: For he will avenge the blood of his servants, And will render vengeance to his adversaries, And will make expiation for his land, for his people.And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun.And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel;and he said unto them, Set your heart unto all the words which I testify unto you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.For it is no vain thing for you; because it is your life, and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it.And Jehovah spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying,Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession;and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people:because ye trespassed against me in the midst of the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah of Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.For thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither into the land which I give the children of Israel.And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death.And he said, Jehovah came from Sinai, And rose from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Paran, And he came from the ten thousands of holy ones: At his right hand was a fiery law for them.Yea, he loveth the people; All his saints are in thy hand: And they sat down at thy feet; shall receive of thy words.Moses commanded us a law, for the assembly of Jacob.And he was king in Jeshurun, When the heads of the people were gathered, All the tribes of Israel together.Let Reuben live, and not die; Nor let his men be few.And this is of Judah: and he said, Hear, Jehovah, the voice of Judah, And bring him in unto his people. With his hands he contended for himself; And thou shalt be a help against his adversaries.And of Levi he said, Thummim and thy Urim are with thy godly one, Whom thou didst prove at Massah, With whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;Who said of his father, and of his mother, I have not seen him; Neither did he acknowledge his brethren, Nor knew he his own children: For they have observed thy word, And keep thy covenant.They shall teach Jacob thine ordinances, And Israel thy law: They shall put incense before thee, And whole burnt-offering upon thine altar.Bless, Jehovah, his substance, And accept the work of his hands: through the loins of them that rise up against him, And of them that hate him, that they rise not again.Of Benjamin he said, The beloved of Jehovah shall dwell in safety by him; He covereth him all the day long, And he dwelleth between his shoulders.And of Joseph he said, Blessed of Jehovah be his land, For the precious things of heaven, for the dew, And for the deep that coucheth beneath,And for the precious things of the fruits of the sun, And for the precious things of the growth of the moons,And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, And for the precious things of the everlasting hills,And for the precious things of the earth and the fulness thereof, And the good will of him that dwelt in the bush. come upon the head of Joseph, And upon the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.The firstling of his herd, majesty is his; And his horns are the horns of the wild-ox: With them he shall push the peoples all of them, the ends of the earth: And they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, And they are the thousands of Manasseh.And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; And, Issachar, in thy tents.They shall call the peoples unto the mountain; There shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness: For they shall suck the abundance of the seas, And the hidden treasures of the sand.And of Gad he said, Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: He dwelleth as a lioness, And teareth the arm, yea, the crown of the head.And he provided the first part for himself, For there was the lawgiver’s portion reserved; And he came the heads of the people; He executed the righteousness of Jehovah, And his ordinances with Israel.And of Dan he said, Dan is a lion’s whelp, That leapeth forth from Bashan.And of Naphtali he said, O Naphtali, satisfied with favor, And full with the blessing of Jehovah, Possess thou the west and the south.And of Asher he said, Blessed be Asher with children; Let him be acceptable unto his brethren, And let him dip his foot in oil.Thy bars shall be iron and brass; And as thy days, so shall thy strength be.There is none like unto God, O Jeshurun, Who rideth upon the heavens for thy help, And in his excellency on the skies.The eternal God is thy dwelling-place, And underneath are the everlasting arms. And he thrust out the enemy from before thee, And said, Destroy.And Israel dwelleth in safety, The fountain of Jacob alone, In a land of grain and new wine; his heavens drop down dew.Happy art thou, O Israel: Who is like unto thee, a people saved by Jehovah, The shield of thy help, And the sword of thy excellency! And thine enemies shall submit themselves unto thee; And thou shalt tread upon their high places.And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And Jehovah showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan,and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the hinder sea,and the South, and the Plain of the valley of Jericho the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar.And Jehovah said unto him, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.So Moses the servant of Jehovah died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of Jehovah.And he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.And Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping in the mourning for Moses were ended.And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as Jehovah commanded Moses.And there hath not arisen a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face,in all the signs and the wonders, which Jehovah sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land,and in all the mighty hand, and in all the great terror, which Moses wrought in the sight of all Israel.In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream and told the sum of the matters.Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of heaven brake forth upon the great sea.And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon two feet as a man; and a man’s heart was given to it.And, behold, another beast, a second, like to a bear; and it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.After this I beheld, and, lo, another, like a leopard, which had upon its back four wings of a bird; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.After this I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, a fourth beast, terrible and powerful, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, the wheels thereof burning fire.A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burned with fire.And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.As for me, Daniel, my spirit was grieved in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, that shall arise out of the earth.But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.Then I desired to know the truth concerning the fourth beast, which was diverse from all of them, exceeding terrible, whose teeth were of iron, and its nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet;and concerning the ten horns that were on its head, and the other which came up, and before which three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake great things, whose look was more stout than its fellows.I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings.And he shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time.But the judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts much troubled me, and my countenance was changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.**

Looking Forward to Judgment If the Bible is ever clear about anything, it’s clear on the fact that God is a God of judgment and that sooner or later, in one way or another, the judgment so lacking here and now is going to come and be administered by God Himself, “the Judge of all the earth” (Gen. 18:25

**25 Surely you will not destroy the good people along with the evil ones; then they would be treated the same. You are the judge of all the earth. Won’t you do what is right?”**

; see also Ps. 58:11

**11  Then people will say, “There really are rewards for doing what is right. There really is a God who judges the world.”**

; 94:2

**2  Rise up, Judge of the earth, and give the proud what they deserve.**

; 98:9

**9  Let them sing before the Lord, because he is coming to judge the world. He will judge the world fairly; he will judge the peoples with fairness.**

). As Paul himself wrote: “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:12

**12 So each of us will have to answer to God.**

). Scary thought, isn’t it? Having to give an account of ourselves before the God who knows the deepest things, the God who will “bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil” (Eccles. 12:14

**14  God will judge everything, even what is done in secret, the good and the evil.**

). Yet the judgment ultimately reveals the goodness and grace of God and that He is both just and merciful in how He deals with both the saved and the lost. This week we will explore the deeper themes of the judgment in relation to the great controversy raging in the universe, and we will look especially at what happens when God’s faithful people face the inevitable “judgment to come” (Acts 24:25

**25 But Felix became afraid when Paul spoke about living right, self-control, and the time when God will judge the world. He said, “Go away now. When I have more time, I will call for you.”**

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The Cross and the Gavel  
The last book of the Bible, Revelation, focuses on the culmination of the agelong controversy between good and evil. Lucifer, a rebel angel, challenged the justice, fairness, and wisdom of God. He claimed that God is unfair and unjust in the way He administers the universe. Revelation’s final judgment is at the very center of this conflict over God’s character. Revelation 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

reads, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.” The gospel and the judgment, both parts of the first angel’s message, are inseparably intertwined. Were it not for the “everlasting gospel,” we would have no hope in facing the impending judgment. In fact, as we will see, the “everlasting gospel” is our only hope as we approach the judgment. There is no question that part of the gospel is the announcement of this event. During the judgment the unfallen worlds will see that God has done everything He can to save every human being. It reveals God’s justice and mercy. It says something about His love and law. It speaks of His gracious willingness to save and His power to deliver. The judgment is part of God’s ultimate solution to the sin problem. God answered Satan’s charges on the cross, but in the judgment, He reveals that He has truly done everything possible to save us. Heaven’s infinite, exact, detailed records will be opened (see Dan. 7:10

**10  A river of fire was flowing from in front of him. Many thousands of angels were serving him, and millions of angels stood before him. Court was ready to begin, and the books were opened.**

) at the judgment. We are so precious to God that the entire universe will pause to consider the choices we have made in light of the call of the Holy Spirit and the redemption so freely provided by Christ on Calvary’s cross. Both the cross and the judgment reveal that God is just and merciful. The law demands the death of the sinner. Justice declares, “The wages of sin is death,” but mercy responds, “The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23

**23 The payment for sin is death. But God gives us the free gift of life forever in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

). If God’s law could be changed or abolished, it would be totally unnecessary for Jesus to die. Christ’s death establishes the eternal nature of the law, and the law is the basis of the judgment. Our works reveal our choices and our loyalty to God. According to Ephesians 2:8

**8 I mean that you have been saved by grace through believing. You did not save yourselves; it was a gift from God.**

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**9 It was not the result of your own efforts, so you cannot brag about it.**

, “by grace you have been saved through faith . . . not of works, lest anyone should boast.” But when Christ saves us, He changes us, “for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works” (verse 10). Our good works, even when empowered by the Holy Spirit, do not save us, but they do testify that our faith is genuine. God’s final judgment strips away all pretense, all hypocrisy, all falsehood, and pierces into the very depth of our being. Journal: How do you see the inseparability of the gospel from the judgment?What hope for yourself can you take away from the link between the gospel and judgment?

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Behind the Scenes  
The prophetic books of Daniel and Revelation are companion volumes that point us to the unfolding events in the last days of earth’s history. The book of Revelation announces that the hour of God’s judgment has come. The book of Daniel reveals when the judgment began. In Daniel 7 God revealed the history of the world to the prophet. He watched as nations rose and fell and persecuting powers oppressed His people. After describing Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, Rome, the fall of the Roman Empire, and the persecution of the church for the 1,260 years depicted in the text (Dan. 7:25

**25 This king will speak against the Most High God, and he will hurt and kill God’s holy people. He will try to change times and laws that have already been set. The holy people that belong to God will be in that king’s power for three and one-half years.**

; see also Rev. 12:6

**6 The woman ran away into the desert to a place God prepared for her where she would be taken care of for one thousand two hundred sixty days.**

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**14 But the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle so she could fly to the place prepared for her in the desert. There she would be taken care of for three and one-half years, away from the snake.**

), God focused Daniel’s mind on a glorious celestial event that will set all things right. The prophet’s attention was directed from the rise and fall of nations and the oppressive powers of the earth to the throne room of the universe and God’s final judgment, when He will right every wrong and establish His everlasting kingdom of righteousness. God took Daniel in prophetic vision from the chaos and conflict of the earth to the glories of heaven’s sanctuary and the sitting of the supreme court of the universe, where Christ, the rightful ruler of this world, would receive from His Father the kingdom that was rightfully His. The destiny of all humanity is decided in heaven’s courtroom. Right prevails, truth triumphs, justice reigns. This is one of the most amazing, most marvelous, most spectacular scenes in all of Scripture. And the good news is that it ends very well for God’s faithful people, those clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Jesus approaches His heavenly Father in the presence of the entire universe. Heavenly beings crowd in around the throne of God, and the entire universe of unfallen beings stands in awe of this judgment scene. The long conflict that has waged for millennia is soon to be over. The battle for the throne of the universe is fully, completely decided. In Revelation 4 John beholds an open door in heaven and receives the invitation to “come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this” (verse 1). Jesus invited the apostle to look through the open door to view cosmic scenes in the great controversy between good and evil. With John we too can look through that open door and receive a glimpse of the eternal plan of salvation. We are witnesses of issues that are being decided in heaven’s celestial court. Fundamental issues in the great controversy between good and evil develop before our eyes through these verses. Revelation 4:2–4

**2 Immediately I was in the Spirit, and before me was a throne in heaven, and someone was sitting on it. 3 The One who sat on the throne looked like precious stones, like jasper and carnelian. All around the throne was a rainbow the color of an emerald. 4 Around the throne there were twenty-four other thrones with twenty-four elders sitting on them. They were dressed in white and had golden crowns on their heads.**

obviously reveals a throne room scene. God the Father sits upon the throne surrounded by heavenly beings. There is thunder and lightning, symbolizing God’s judgments. We also notice in Revelation 4:4

**4 Around the throne there were twenty-four other thrones with twenty-four elders sitting on them. They were dressed in white and had golden crowns on their heads.**

that 24 elders are present around God’s throne. Who are these 24 elders? There were 24 divisions in the Levitical priesthood of ancient Israel. These priests represented the people before God. In 1 Peter 2:9

**9 But you are a chosen people, royal priests, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession. You were chosen to tell about the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.**

the apostle declares that New Testament believers are a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood.” Perhaps these 24 elders represent all the redeemed that will one day rejoice around the throne of God, or perhaps they represent those who were resurrected when Christ was resurrected—those who ascended to heaven with Him (Matt. 27:52

**52 The graves opened, and many of God’s people who had died were raised from the dead.**

; Eph. 4:7

**7 Christ gave each one of us the special gift of grace, showing how generous he is.**

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**8 That is why it says in the Scriptures, “When he went up to the heights, he led a parade of captives, and he gave gifts to people.” Psalm 68:18**

). Either way, this is good news. These are some of the redeemed from the earth sitting around the throne of God. They faced temptations just as we face them. Through the grace of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, they overcame. They are clothed in “white robes,” signifying the righteousness of Christ that covers and cleanses their sins. They have a golden crown upon their heads, signifying that they are victorious in the battle against evil and are part of heaven’s royal line of faith-filled believers (Rev. 4:4

**4 Around the throne there were twenty-four other thrones with twenty-four elders sitting on them. They were dressed in white and had golden crowns on their heads.**

). We see a throne in heaven with God seated upon it. Soon after the scene begins, all of heaven starts to sing, and the crescendo of praise builds higher and still higher: “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created” (verse 11). Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?There are 24 humans around God’s throne in this scene. What does that imply about what heaven will be like? About the judgment?What does it mean to you personally to be part of the “royal priesthood” of believers? How does it impact your day-to-day life?

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What relationship do the following verses have with Daniel 7? Psalm 51:1–4

**God, be merciful to me because you are loving. Because you are always ready to be merciful, wipe out all my wrongs. 2  Wash away all my guilt and make me clean again. 3  I know about my wrongs, and I can’t forget my sin. 4  You are the only one I have sinned against; I have done what you say is wrong. You are right when you speak and fair when you judge.**

Revelation 20:12

**12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. Then books were opened, and the book of life was opened. The dead were judged by what they had done, which was written in the books.**

Revelation 4:2–4

**2 Immediately I was in the Spirit, and before me was a throne in heaven, and someone was sitting on it. 3 The One who sat on the throne looked like precious stones, like jasper and carnelian. All around the throne was a rainbow the color of an emerald. 4 Around the throne there were twenty-four other thrones with twenty-four elders sitting on them. They were dressed in white and had golden crowns on their heads.**

Revelation 5:1–12

**Then I saw a scroll in the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. The scroll had writing on both sides and was kept closed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a powerful angel calling in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?” 3 But there was no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth who could open the scroll or look inside it. 4 I cried bitterly because there was no one who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. 5 But one of the elders said to me, “Do not cry! The Lion n from the tribe of Judah, David’s descendant, has won the victory so that he is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.” 6 Then I saw a Lamb standing in the center of the throne and in the middle of the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb looked as if he had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that were sent into all the world. 7 The Lamb came and took the scroll from the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. 8 When he took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders bowed down before the Lamb. Each one of them had a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s holy people. 9 And they all sang a new song to the Lamb: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were killed, and with the blood of your death you bought people for God from every tribe, language, people, and nation. 10  You made them to be a kingdom of priests for our God, and they will rule on the earth.” 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voices of many angels around the throne, and the four living creatures, and the elders. There were thousands and thousands of angels, 12 saying in a loud voice: “The Lamb who was killed is worthy to receive power, wealth, wisdom, and strength, honor, glory, and praise!”**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Daniel 7?

inVite

Jesus Is Worthy  
In Revelation 5:1–5

**Then I saw a scroll in the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. The scroll had writing on both sides and was kept closed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a powerful angel calling in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?” 3 But there was no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth who could open the scroll or look inside it. 4 I cried bitterly because there was no one who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. 5 But one of the elders said to me, “Do not cry! The Lion n from the tribe of Judah, David’s descendant, has won the victory so that he is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”**

we once again see a throne. A scroll is introduced with writing on both sides. It is sealed with the divine seal, and no one in heaven or on earth is worthy enough to open the scroll. Heavenly beings tremble. The issue is serious. No angelic being can represent humanity in earth’s final judgment. John weeps because no one can open the scroll or even look at it. Then one of the elders, one of those redeemed from the earth, speaks words of encouragement to John’s heart. Jesus, the Lamb of God, is worthy to open the scroll. John beholds the ultimate answer to the problem of sin in Revelation 5:5

**5 But one of the elders said to me, “Do not cry! The Lion n from the tribe of Judah, David’s descendant, has won the victory so that he is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”**

. Here the aged prophet beholds the only way anyone can pass the final judgment at the throne of God: “But one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll.’. . . And I looked, and behold, . . . a Lamb as though it had been slain” (Rev. 5:5

**5 But one of the elders said to me, “Do not cry! The Lion n from the tribe of Judah, David’s descendant, has won the victory so that he is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.”**

, 6

**6 Then I saw a Lamb standing in the center of the throne and in the middle of the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb looked as if he had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that were sent into all the world.**

). In Revelation 5:8–12

**8 When he took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders bowed down before the Lamb. Each one of them had a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God’s holy people. 9 And they all sang a new song to the Lamb: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were killed, and with the blood of your death you bought people for God from every tribe, language, people, and nation. 10  You made them to be a kingdom of priests for our God, and they will rule on the earth.” 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voices of many angels around the throne, and the four living creatures, and the elders. There were thousands and thousands of angels, 12 saying in a loud voice: “The Lamb who was killed is worthy to receive power, wealth, wisdom, and strength, honor, glory, and praise!”**

Jesus, the Lamb of God who sacrificed His life for the salvation of all humanity, takes the scroll of judgment and opens it. All of heaven bursts forth in rapturous praise, for His victory over Satan’s temptations, His death on Calvary’s cross, His resurrection, and His ministry as high priest provide salvation for all who choose by faith to respond to His grace. The judgment is incredibly good news for the people of God. It speaks of the end of the reign of sin and the deliverance of God’s people. Jesus stands for us in the judgment. His perfect righteous life covers us. His righteousness works within us to make us new. His grace pardons us, transforms us, and empowers us to live godly lives. Can anything be more encouraging? We need not fear. We are not alone in the judgment, and the powers of evil are soundly defeated. Judgment is passed in “favor” of the people of God (Dan. 7:22

**22 until God, who has been alive forever, came. He judged in favor of the holy people who belong to the Most High God; then the time came for them to receive the power to rule.**

). The purpose of the judgment is not to find out how bad we are but to reveal how good God is. Think about the amazing words of Paul in Hebrews 7:25

**25 So he is able always to save those who come to God through him because he always lives, asking God to help them.**

, which, talking about Jesus as our high priest, says that “He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him” Save to the uttermost. The Greek word for “uttermost” means “full, complete, total.” It is Jesus who saves us; our job is to surrender to Him, claiming His victory for us. Our trust must be in Him, not in ourselves. Journal: Meditate on Daniel 7 again and look for where Jesus is.How is Jesus as our substitute the only hope for salvation?How do you see Jesus differently in the light of this week’s lesson?

inSight

Hope in the Judgment  
The fact that the acknowledged people of God are represented as standing before the Lord in filthy garments should lead to humility and deep searching of heart on the part of all who profess His name. Those who are indeed purifying their souls by obeying the truth will have a most humble opinion of themselves. The more closely they view the spotless character of Christ, the stronger will be their desire to be conformed to His image, and the less will they see of purity or holiness in themselves. But while we should realize our sinful condition, we are to rely upon Christ as our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption. We cannot answer the charges of Satan against us. Christ alone can make an effectual plea in our behalf. He is able to silence the accuser with arguments founded not upon our merits, but on His own. (Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948], vol. 5, 471, 472.) Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. . . . The people of God have been in many respects very faulty. Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these in the most exaggerated light, declaring: “Will God banish me and my angels from His presence, and yet reward those who have been guilty of the same sins? Thou canst not do this, O Lord, in justice. Thy throne will not stand in righteousness and judgment. Justice demands that sentence be pronounced against them.” But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves to the control of evil. They have put away their sins, and have sought the Lord in humility and contrition, and the divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin, and also their repentance, declares: “ ‘The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.’ I gave My life for these souls. They are graven upon the palms of My hands.” (White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 5, 473, 474.) In the Judgment, God will ask those who profess to be Christians, Why did you claim to believe in My Son, and continue to transgress My law? Who required this at your hands—to trample upon My rules of righteousness? “Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” The gospel of the New Testament is not the Old Testament standard lowered to meet the sinner and save him in his sins. God requires of all His subjects obedience, entire obedience to all His commandments. He demands now as ever perfect righteousness as the only title to heaven. Christ is our hope and our refuge. His righteousness only is imputed to the obedient. Let us accept it through faith, that the Father shall find in us no sin. But those who have trampled on the holy law will have no right to claim that righteousness. Oh that we might view the immensity of the plan of salvation as obedient children to all God’s requirements, believing that we have peace with God through Jesus Christ, our atoning sacrifice! (Ellen G. White, in Review and Herald, Sept. 21, 1886.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, what are some decisions that must be made in your personal life?What are some practical decisions you must make in your school, family, workplace, and church?Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

Why is the judgment good news and not bad news?How does the knowledge that “the hour of His judgment has come” impact our daily lives?What do you think Jesus’ exact role in the judgment is? What do you think He will be saying and thinking?How can Christ’s role in the judgement motivate us to be more faithful to Him, knowing that only because of what He did for us can we have the hope of salvation?How does the judgment reveal God’s character to the universe?How does Psalm 51 help shed light on the meaning and purpose of the judgment? What are some simple steps you could take today to start living differently because we know the judgment is real?

THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT

inTro

Beneath His Wings  
Read This Week’s Passage: Daniel 8–9

**In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me, Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first.And I saw in the vision; now it was so, that when I saw, I was in Shushan the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision, and I was by the river Ulai.Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last.I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; and no beasts could stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and magnified himself.And as I was considering, behold, a he-goat came from the west over the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.And he came to the ram that had the two horns, which I saw standing before the river, and ran upon him in the fury of his power.And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with anger against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns; and there was no power in the ram to stand before him; but he cast him down to the ground, and trampled upon him; and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.And the he-goat magnified himself exceedingly: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and instead of it there came up four notable toward the four winds of heaven.And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the glorious land.And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and some of the host and of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled upon them.Yea, it magnified itself, even to the prince of the host; and it took away from him the continual burnt-offering, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.And the host was given over together with the continual burnt-offering through transgression; and it cast down truth to the ground, and it did and prospered.Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said unto that certain one who spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the continual burnt-offering, and the transgression that maketh desolate, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred evenings mornings; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, that I sought to understand it; and, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man.And I heard a man’s voice between the Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision.So he came near where I stood; and when he came, I was affrighted, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man; for the vision belongeth to the time of the end.Now as he was speaking with me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face toward the ground; but he touched me, and set me upright.And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the latter time of the indignation; for it belongeth to the appointed time of the end.The ram which thou sawest, that had the two horns, they are the kings of Media and Persia.And the rough he-goat is the king of Greece: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king.And as for that which was broken, in the place whereof four stood up, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not with his power.And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and do; and he shall destroy the mighty ones and the holy people.And through his policy he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and in security shall he destroy many: he shall also stand up against the prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.And the vision of the evenings and mornings which hath been told is true: but shut thou up the vision; for it belongeth to many days.And I, Daniel, fainted, and was sick certain days; then I rose up, and did the king’s business: and I wondered at the vision, but none understood it.In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans,in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years whereof the word of Jehovah came to Jeremiah the prophet, for the accomplishing of the desolations of Jerusalem, even seventy years.And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.And I prayed unto Jehovah my God, and made confession, and said, Oh, Lord, the great and dreadful God, who keepeth covenant and lovingkindness with them that love him and keep his commandments,we have sinned, and have dealt perversely, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even turning aside from thy precepts and from thine ordinances;neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, that spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of face, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness; for we have rebelled against him;neither have we obeyed the voice of Jehovah our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even turning aside, that they should not obey thy voice: therefore hath the curse been poured out upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God; for we have sinned against him.And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil; for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet have we not entreated the favor of Jehovah our God, that we should turn from our iniquities, and have discernment in thy truth.Therefore hath Jehovah watched over the evil, and brought it upon us; for Jehovah our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth, and we have not obeyed his voice.And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, let thine anger and thy wrath, I pray thee, be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are round about us.Now therefore, O our God, hearken unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord’s sake.O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies’ sake.O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God, because thy city and thy people are called by thy name.And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before Jehovah my God for the holy mountain of my God;yea, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.And he instructed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee wisdom and understanding.At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment went forth, and I am come to tell thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision.Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times.And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined.And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.**

Beneath His WingsSeveral years ago National Geographic magazine published a story about a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park in the United States. After it ended, forest rangers trekked up a mountain to assess the damage. One ranger found a bird literally burned to ashes at the base of a tree. Somewhat sickened by the eerie sight, he knocked over the bird with a stick.When he moved it, three tiny baby birds scurried from under their dead mother’s wings. The loving mother, keenly aware of impending disaster, had carried her offspring to the base of the tree and had gathered them under her wings. She could have flown to safety, but had refused to abandon her babies. What a picture of Christ!The fires of God’s judgment burned themselves out on Him at Calvary, and all who are in Christ are safe forever beneath His wings. At the cross Christ was judged as a condemned sinner so that we could be judged as righteous citizens of the heavenly kingdom. He was judged as a criminal so that we could be set free from the destructive fires of eternal loss, both figuratively and literally.

inGest

2,300 Days  
As we have already seen, there must be a judgment before Christ comes. The angel announces in a loud voice that “the hour of His judgment has come” (Rev. 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

), and the book of Daniel gives us the time when this judgment began. Each Jew understood the meaning of the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary. It occurred annually on the Day of Atonement, which was the day of judgment. Although Daniel understood the concept of the cleansing of the sanctuary and the judgment, he was confused about the 2,300-day prophecy (see Dan. 8:14

**14 The angel said to me, “This will happen for twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings. Then the holy place will be repaired.”**

). Sent by God, Gabriel began to explain the vision to Daniel (Dan. 8:15–26

**15 I, Daniel, saw this vision and tried to understand what it meant. In it I saw someone who looked like a man standing near me. 16 And I heard a man’s voice calling from the Ulai Canal: “Gabriel, explain the vision to this man.” 17 Gabriel came to where I was standing. When he came close to me, I was very afraid and bowed facedown on the ground. But Gabriel said to me, “Human being, understand that this vision is about the time of the end.” 18 While Gabriel was speaking, I fell into a deep sleep with my face on the ground. Then he touched me and lifted me to my feet. 19 He said, “Now, I will explain to you what will happen in the time of God’s anger. Your vision was about the set time of the end. 20 “You saw a male sheep with two horns, which are the kings of Media and Persia. 21 The male goat is the king of Greece, and the big horn between its eyes is the first king. 22 The four horns that grew in the place of the broken horn are four kingdoms. Those four kingdoms will come from the nation of the first king, but they will not be as strong as the first king. 23 “When the end comes near for those kingdoms, a bold and cruel king who tells lies will come. This will happen when many people have turned against God. 24 This king will be very powerful, but his power will not come from himself. He will cause terrible destruction and will be successful in everything he does. He will destroy powerful people and even God’s holy people. 25 This king will succeed by using lies and force. He will think that he is very important. He will destroy many people without warning; he will try to fight even the Prince of princes! But that cruel king will be destroyed, and not by human power. 26 “The vision that has been shown to you about these evenings and mornings is true. But seal up the vision, because those things won’t happen for a long time.”**

). He revealed that the ram represents Media-Persia and the goat represents Greece (verses 20, 21). Though not explicitly named like the two powers before it, the next entity, the little horn, is clearly Rome (verses 9, 23, 24). Gabriel then described a kind of religious-political phase of Rome, which would “cast down the truth to the ground” (verses 10–12) and interfere with Christ’s heavenly ministry (verses 10–12). The cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14

**14 The angel said to me, “This will happen for twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings. Then the holy place will be repaired.”**

, the climax of the chapter, is God’s answer to the challenge of earthly and religious powers that have attempted to usurp His authority. It is part of God’s divine solution to the sin problem. At the end of chapter 8 we can clearly see that Daniel did not understand the part of the vision about the 2,300 days: “I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it” (verse 27). The part about the ram, the goat, and the little horn had already been explained, the first two powers having been identified by name (verses 20, 21), but the cleansing of the sanctuary was not. Daniel was therefore speaking of the 2,300 days. The next chapter, Daniel 9, records the angel Gabriel returning to explain the 2,300 days: “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand” (verse 22). Gabriel amazed Daniel as he revealed the answer to his prayer, which was much broader than he ever imagined. He took Daniel down the stream of time and revealed the truth about the coming Messiah, nearly giving the exact dates of the beginning of His ministry and His cruel death, events that are directly tied to the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8. In other words, Christ’s death and the judgment are inseparably linked. Some argue that the 2,300 days are literal days rather than years. They also believe the little horn of Daniel 8 applies to the Seleucid military leader Antiochus Epiphanes (216 B.C.–164 B.C.), who attacked Jerusalem and defiled the Jewish temple. However, this interpretation is erroneous for two reasons: First, 2,300 days does not fit Antiochus’ time frame. Second, this belief directly contradicts the angel’s clear instruction that the vision applies to the “time of the end,” because Antiochus obviously did not live at the time of the end. Journal: Why is it significant that the death of Jesus, as revealed in Daniel 9:24–27

**24 “God has ordered four hundred ninety years for your people and your holy city for these reasons: to stop people from turning against God; to put an end to sin; to take away evil; to bring in goodness that continues forever; to bring about the vision and prophecy; and to appoint a most holy place. 25 “Learn and understand these things. A command will come to rebuild Jerusalem. The time from this command until the appointed leader comes will be forty-nine years and four hundred thirty-four years. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and a trench filled with water around it, but it will be built in times of trouble. 26 After the four hundred thirty-four years the appointed leader will be killed; he will have nothing. The people of the leader who is to come will destroy the city and the holy place. The end of the city will come like a flood, and war will continue until the end. God has ordered that place to be completely destroyed. 27 That leader will make firm an agreement with many people for seven years. He will stop the offerings and sacrifices after three and one-half years. A destroyer will do blasphemous things until the ordered end comes to the destroyed city.”**

, is directly linked to the judgment in Daniel 8:14

**14 The angel said to me, “This will happen for twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings. Then the holy place will be repaired.”**

? What great truth is taught here by this link?What does the fact that Gabriel called Daniel “greatly beloved” tell us about the intimate link between heaven and earth?

inTerpret

490 Days  
The angel plainly instructed Daniel to “consider the matter, and understand the vision” (Dan. 9:23

**23 When you first started praying, an answer was given, and I came to tell you, because God loves you very much. So think about the message and understand the vision.**

). What matter, and what vision? Because there is no vision recorded in Daniel 9, the angel Gabriel must have been speaking of the part of the vision in Daniel 8 that the prophet did not understand—the 2,300 days (Dan. 8:27

**27 I, Daniel, became very weak and was sick for several days after that vision. Then I got up and went back to work for the king, but I was very upset about the vision. I didn’t understand what it meant.**

). The first portion of the explanation in Daniel 9:24–27

**24 “God has ordered four hundred ninety years for your people and your holy city for these reasons: to stop people from turning against God; to put an end to sin; to take away evil; to bring in goodness that continues forever; to bring about the vision and prophecy; and to appoint a most holy place. 25 “Learn and understand these things. A command will come to rebuild Jerusalem. The time from this command until the appointed leader comes will be forty-nine years and four hundred thirty-four years. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and a trench filled with water around it, but it will be built in times of trouble. 26 After the four hundred thirty-four years the appointed leader will be killed; he will have nothing. The people of the leader who is to come will destroy the city and the holy place. The end of the city will come like a flood, and war will continue until the end. God has ordered that place to be completely destroyed. 27 That leader will make firm an agreement with many people for seven years. He will stop the offerings and sacrifices after three and one-half years. A destroyer will do blasphemous things until the ordered end comes to the destroyed city.”**

relates to God’s people, the Jews: “Seventy weeks are determined for your people” (verse 24). In biblical prophecy, one prophetic day equals one literal year (Ezek. 4:6

**6 “After you have finished these three hundred ninety days, lie down a second time, on your right side. You will then have the guilt of Judah on you. I will give it to you for forty days, a day for each year of their sin.**

; Num. 14:34

**34 For forty years you will suffer for your sins—a year for each of the forty days you explored the land. You will know me as your enemy.’**

). In Daniel and Revelation, when there is symbolic imagery, there is usually a symbolic time prophecy as well. One of the ways we can be certain that the day-year principle of prophecy applies here is that when we use it in Daniel’s prophecy, a historical event lines up perfectly with the prophesied time line (see inVite). If we apply this principle, 70 weeks are composed of 490 days. Since one prophetic day equals one literal year, 490 days are 490 literal years. Gabriel tells Daniel that 490 years are “cut off” (the literal meaning of the Hebrew word chathak, sometimes translated “determined”). Cut off from what? It could be the only other time prophecy alluded to here: the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14

**14 The angel said to me, “This will happen for twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings. Then the holy place will be repaired.”**

. These 490 years, a time prophecy, are directly linked to the time prophecy of Daniel 8:14

**14 The angel said to me, “This will happen for twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings. Then the holy place will be repaired.”**

. Thus, we can see that Gabriel came to help Daniel understand what he struggled with in the previous chapter: the 2,300 days. The first 490 years of the 2,300-year prophecy were designated especially for the Jewish nation of antiquity and the coming of the Messiah. The remaining part of the 2,300 years has to do with God’s people, both Jew and Gentile, along with the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary and ultimately, the second coming of Christ. The first 490 years apply to the first Advent of the Messiah, which ended in A.D. 34. Subtracting 490 years from 2,300 years leaves us with 1,810 years. These next 1,810 years apply to God’s people. If we begin at A.D. 34 and add 1,810 years, we come to the year A.D. 1844. In light of the cleansing or restoration of the truth about the sanctuary and heaven’s end-time judgment, God makes His final appeal to all humanity in Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

, 7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

to respond to His love, accept His grace, and live godly, obedient lives. Because of the people’s sins—their iniquities—Leviticus 16:16

**16 Because the people of Israel have been unclean, Aaron will perform the acts to make the Most Holy Place ready for service to the Lord. Then it will be clean from the sins and crimes of the Israelites. He must also do this for the Meeting Tent, because it stays in the middle of unclean people.**

teaches that the sanctuary had to be cleansed, which could happen only with blood. It’s the same with us. We need a Savior, whose life was symbolized by the animals slain on the Day of Atonement, as the only way to pass through the judgment. On that annual day of judgment, Leviticus 23:26–29

**The Day of Cleansing 26 The Lord said to Moses, 27 “The Day of Cleansing will be on the tenth day of the seventh month. There will be a holy meeting, and you will deny yourselves and bring an offering made by fire to the Lord. 28 Do not do any work on that day, because it is the Day of Cleansing. On that day the priests will go before the Lord and perform the acts to make you clean from sin so you will belong to the Lord. 29 “Anyone who refuses to give up food on this day must be cut off from the people.**

states that the Israelites were to “afflict their souls.” This expression indicates that they were to humble themselves, examine their hearts, confess their sins, repent, and ask God to cleanse them, just as the high priest was cleansing the earthly sanctuary. The prophetic chapters of Daniel 7–9 and Revelation 14 focus especially on the urgent appeals to prepare given in the judgment hour. Since 1844 we have been living in the judgment hour, affirmed by the message of the first angel: “The hour of His judgment has come” (Rev. 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

). Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?How do we today “afflict our souls”?

inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Daniel 8–9? Ezra 7Matthew 3:13–17

**Jesus Is Baptized by John 13 At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River and wanted John to baptize him. 14 But John tried to stop him, saying, “Why do you come to me to be baptized? I need to be baptized by you!” 15 Jesus answered, “Let it be this way for now. We should do all things that are God’s will.” So John agreed to baptize Jesus. 16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. Then heaven opened, and he saw God’s Spirit coming down on him like a dove. 17 And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love, and I am very pleased with him.”**

Romans 5:6–9

**6 When we were unable to help ourselves, at the right time, Christ died for us, although we were living against God. 7 Very few people will die to save the life of someone else. Although perhaps for a good person someone might possibly die. 8 But God shows his great love for us in this way: Christ died for us while we were still sinners. 9 So through Christ we will surely be saved from God’s anger, because we have been made right with God by the blood of Christ’s death.**

Mark 15:38

**38 The curtain in the Temple n was torn into two pieces, from the top to the bottom.**

Leviticus 16:16

**16 Because the people of Israel have been unclean, Aaron will perform the acts to make the Most Holy Place ready for service to the Lord. Then it will be clean from the sins and crimes of the Israelites. He must also do this for the Meeting Tent, because it stays in the middle of unclean people.**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Daniel 8–9?

inVite

The Messiah “Cut Off”  
Another easy way to look at the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9:24–27

**24 “God has ordered four hundred ninety years for your people and your holy city for these reasons: to stop people from turning against God; to put an end to sin; to take away evil; to bring in goodness that continues forever; to bring about the vision and prophecy; and to appoint a most holy place. 25 “Learn and understand these things. A command will come to rebuild Jerusalem. The time from this command until the appointed leader comes will be forty-nine years and four hundred thirty-four years. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and a trench filled with water around it, but it will be built in times of trouble. 26 After the four hundred thirty-four years the appointed leader will be killed; he will have nothing. The people of the leader who is to come will destroy the city and the holy place. The end of the city will come like a flood, and war will continue until the end. God has ordered that place to be completely destroyed. 27 That leader will make firm an agreement with many people for seven years. He will stop the offerings and sacrifices after three and one-half years. A destroyer will do blasphemous things until the ordered end comes to the destroyed city.”**

is in three parts: first, the 70 weeks (verse 24) as a whole; second, the seven weeks and 62 weeks, or 69 weeks (verse 25) that are part of the 70 weeks; and third, the last week, the seventieth (verse 27). This last week is divided, “in the middle of the week” (verse 27), into two three-and-a-half-year sections. That’s it. Seventy weeks, which are broken down into 69 weeks and one week, and that one week divided in half. So we have the formula, but what is the beginning date? In talking about the 2,300 days, Daniel 8 never specified when the 2,300 days began. “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (verse 14). Unto two thousand and three hundred days—from when? Why not from when Daniel had the vision itself, the “third year of the reign of king Belshazzar” (verse 1)? That doesn’t work. The vision in Daniel 8 didn’t include Babylon, instead starting with events after it, such as Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome, up to “the end.” Why date an event (the cleansing of the sanctuary) that is in the vision from an event (Babylon) that is not? The starting date for the climax of the vision should come from within the vision itself, which started with Media-Persia and extends to “the end.” That’s a lot of years. Which one began it? We are not told in Daniel 8. We are told in Daniel 9. Gabriel began the explanation of the 490-year prophecy with an event that was extremely important to the Jews: the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. Though various decrees had been passed regarding Jerusalem, in Ezra 7 we discover that the decree passed in 457 B.C. allowed the Jews not only to return to their homeland but also to establish themselves as a religious community (see Ezra 7:13

**13 Now I give this order: Any Israelite in my kingdom who wishes may go with you to Jerusalem, including priests and Levites.**

, 27

**27 Praise the Lord, the God of our ancestors. He caused the king to want to honor the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem.**

). It is significant to note that Artaxerxes’ decree was issued in the autumn of 457 B.C. According to Daniel, the time from this decree until the Messiah should be 69 weeks, or 483 years. If we begin at 457 B.C. and move forward in history’s time line, we arrive at A.D. 27. So what happened in A.D. 27? The word “Messiah” means “the anointed one.” In A.D. 27 Jesus Christ, the Messiah, was baptized (see Matt. 3:13–17

**Jesus Is Baptized by John 13 At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River and wanted John to baptize him. 14 But John tried to stop him, saying, “Why do you come to me to be baptized? I need to be baptized by you!” 15 Jesus answered, “Let it be this way for now. We should do all things that are God’s will.” So John agreed to baptize Jesus. 16 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. Then heaven opened, and he saw God’s Spirit coming down on him like a dove. 17 And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love, and I am very pleased with him.”**

). Daniel predicted the exact year for the baptism of Christ, the time at which Jesus would begin His three and a half years of ministry, hundreds of years in advance. “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself” (Dan. 9:26

**26 After the four hundred thirty-four years the appointed leader will be killed; he will have nothing. The people of the leader who is to come will destroy the city and the holy place. The end of the city will come like a flood, and war will continue until the end. God has ordered that place to be completely destroyed.**

). The Messiah would be “cut off,” or crucified. The verse adds “but not for Himself.” In other words, the death of Christ on Calvary’s cross was for us, not for Himself, which is why Paul could write: “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8

**8 But God shows his great love for us in this way: Christ died for us while we were still sinners.**

). Returning to our prophetic time line, in Daniel 9:27

**27 That leader will make firm an agreement with many people for seven years. He will stop the offerings and sacrifices after three and one-half years. A destroyer will do blasphemous things until the ordered end comes to the destroyed city.”**

we read that in the middle of the week, in the last literal seven years of the 70-week prophecy, Christ would “bring an end to sacrifice and offering.” In the middle of this seventieth week, in A.D. 31, Christ confirmed the everlasting covenant with His blood by dying on the cross, and the sacrificial system lost any and all prophetic and salvific significance. These prophecies reveal that Christ, the Messiah, would be crucified and cause the sacrificial system to cease its prophetic function in the spring of A.D. 31. These predictions were fulfilled in every detail. Exactly at Passover, when the high priest was offering the Passover lamb, Christ was sacrificed for us. Journal: Meditate on Daniel 8–9 again and look for where Jesus is.How does the exact prediction of Jesus’ crucifixion deepen your relationship and discipleship with the Lord Jesus Christ?How do you see Him differently in light of this week’s lesson?

inSight

Calculating Correctly  
Our calculation of the prophetic time was so simple and plain that even children could understand it. From the date of the decree of the king of Persia, found in Ezra 7, which was given in 457 before Christ, the 2300 years of Daniel 8:14

**14 The angel said to me, “This will happen for twenty-three hundred evenings and mornings. Then the holy place will be repaired.”**

were supposed to terminate with 1843. Accordingly we looked to the end of this year for the coming of the Lord. We were sadly disappointed when the year entirely passed away, and the Saviour had not come. It was not at first perceived that if the decree did not go forth at the beginning of the year 457 B.C., the 2300 years would not be completed at the close of 1843. But it was ascertained that the decree was given near the close of the year 457 B.C., and therefore the prophetic period must reach to the fall of the year 1844. Therefore the vision of time did not tarry, though it had seemed to do so. We learned to rest upon the language of the prophet: “The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” Habakkuk 2:3

**3  It is not yet time for the message to come true, but that time is coming soon; the message will come true. It may seem like a long time, but be patient and wait for it, because it will surely come; it will not be delayed.**

. God tested and proved His people by the passing of the time in 1843. The mistake made in reckoning the prophetic periods was not at once discovered, even by learned men who opposed the views of those who were looking for Christ’s coming. Scholars declared that Mr. Miller was right in his calculation of the time, though they disputed him in regard to the event that would crown that period. But they, and the waiting people of God, were in a common error on the question of time. Those who had been disappointed were not long left in darkness; for in searching the prophetic periods with earnest prayer the error was discovered, and the tracing of the prophetic pencil down through the tarrying time. In the joyful expectation of the coming of Christ, the apparent tarrying of the vision had not been taken into account, and was a sad and unlooked-for surprise. Yet this very trial was necessary to develop and strengthen the sincere believers in the truth. (Ellen G. White, Life Sketches of Ellen G. White [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1915], 57–59.) But such subjects as the sanctuary, in connection with the 2300 days, the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, are perfectly calculated to explain the past Advent movement and show what our present position is, establish the faith of the doubting, and give certainty to the glorious future. These, I have frequently seen, were the principal subjects on which the messengers should dwell. (Ellen G. White, Early Writings [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1882, 1945], 63.) We should be earnest students of prophecy; we should not rest until we become intelligent in regard to the subject of the sanctuary, which is brought out in the visions of Daniel and John. This subject sheds great light on our present position and work, and gives us unmistakable proof that God has led us in our past experience. It explains our disappointment in 1844, showing us that the sanctuary to be cleansed was not the earth, as we had supposed, but that Christ then entered into the most holy apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, and is there performing the closing work of His priestly office, in fulfillment of the words of the angel to the prophet Daniel. The 2300 days had been found to begin when the commandment of Artaxerxes for the restoration and building of Jerusalem went into effect, in the autumn of 457 B.C. Taking this as the starting point, there was perfect harmony in the application of all the events foretold in the explanation of that period in Daniel 9:25–27

**25 “Learn and understand these things. A command will come to rebuild Jerusalem. The time from this command until the appointed leader comes will be forty-nine years and four hundred thirty-four years. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and a trench filled with water around it, but it will be built in times of trouble. 26 After the four hundred thirty-four years the appointed leader will be killed; he will have nothing. The people of the leader who is to come will destroy the city and the holy place. The end of the city will come like a flood, and war will continue until the end. God has ordered that place to be completely destroyed. 27 That leader will make firm an agreement with many people for seven years. He will stop the offerings and sacrifices after three and one-half years. A destroyer will do blasphemous things until the ordered end comes to the destroyed city.”**

. . . . The seventy weeks, or 490 years, were to pertain especially to the Jews. At the expiration of this period, the nation sealed its rejection of Christ by the persecution of His disciples, and the apostles turned to the Gentiles, A.D. 34. The first 490 years of the 2300 having then ended, 1810 years would remain. From A.D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. “Then,” said the angel, “shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” Our faith in reference to the messages of the first, second, and third angels was correct. The great waymarks we have passed are immovable. Although the hosts of hell may try to tear them from their foundation, and triumph in the thought that they have succeeded, yet they do not succeed. These pillars of truth stand firm as the eternal hills, unmoved by all the efforts of men combined with those of Satan and his host. We can learn much, and should be constantly searching the Scriptures to see if these things are so. (Ellen G. White, Maranatha [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1976], 247.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, what are some decisions that must be made in your personal life?What are some practical decisions you must make in your school, family, workplace, and church?Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

What does the exact calculation of the time of the judgment reveal about God and His plan of salvation for you?How can we frame the prophetic calculations in a more encouraging manner?Why do some mock the seeming complexity of prophecy? What blessing are they missing out on?What is the close relationship between the gospel and judgment? Why is the link between the two such good news for us?How should this relationship help alleviate the fear that many have regarding the idea of judgment?What does Daniel 9:26

**26 After the four hundred thirty-four years the appointed leader will be killed; he will have nothing. The people of the leader who is to come will destroy the city and the holy place. The end of the city will come like a flood, and war will continue until the end. God has ordered that place to be completely destroyed.**

mean that the Messiah is cut off, but “not for Himself”?Why should Jesus being “cut off” for you impact your personal spiritual walk with God?What kind of spiritual experience should the “cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary” bring to us?

WORSHIPING THE CREATOR

inTro

Taken for Granted  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 4:11

**Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created.**

Taken for Granted It’s easy to take things for granted, particularly things we have always known or experienced. How easy, for instance, for young children to take their parents for granted, whom they have known all their short lives? How easy for us, too, to take for granted the sun, the sky, the air, and the ground beneath our feet.However, have you ever stopped to think just how much we take existence itself for granted? How often do we stop and ask the famous philosophical question “Why is there something instead of nothing?” Why does our universe and all the majesty and grandeur and astonishing things in it exist to begin with? According to the latest scientific theory (they tend to change), our universe once did not exist. In other words, ours is a contingent existence; it’s a miracle that we are here at all. And despite all sorts of myths about the universe arising from absolutely nothing or from some kind of mathematical equation, our universe exists because God, the Creator, has made it and everything in it.

inGest

Beyond Isles and Suns  
After His ascension to heaven (Acts 1:9

**9 After he said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud hid him from their sight.**

), Jesus visited the last of the living apostles, John, on the island of Patmos, where he had been exiled by the ruthless Roman emperor Domitian. Even though he was separated from the support of his family, friends, and the Christian community, John was not left alone in the tribulations and trouble he faced as a follower of Christ. His ministry was not over. His witness was not complete. An angelic visitor of dazzling brightness visited John on that lonely isle and brought him a message directly from the throne of God. This message from Jesus was to echo through the centuries down the corridors of time. It is a message of hope for every generation, but especially for God’s last-day people. It is a serious message of warning as well as one of encouragement as we prepare to face the trials of the final days (or any trials we might be facing now) and anticipate Jesus’ second coming. If you were to enter the cave where it is purported that the heavenly angel brought Revelation’s prophetic vision to John, you would immediately notice these words, placed on a plaque at its entrance, that summarize the entire book of Revelation: “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” (Rev. 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

). The central issue in the book of Revelation is worship. We were created as worshiping beings. Every one of us worships something or someone. True worship, the worship of the Creator, enables us to discover life’s true purpose. It gives us a reason for living. It gives us not only something to die for but also, even more significantly, something to live for and, if need be, to endure tribulations for. Indeed, as the final crisis arises, we will better understand the words that “we must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22

**22 making the followers of Jesus stronger and helping them stay in the faith. They said, “We must suffer many things to enter God’s kingdom.”**

). Revelation 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

ends with a clarion call to worship the Creator. This call is especially important now, when most of the scientific and even the Christian world has accepted evolution, a teaching that strikes at the very core of all things biblical and Christian. If evolution were true, our faith would, of necessity, be a lie. That’s how stark the issues are. Revelation’s final appeal, then, is rooted in the Bible’s first book, Genesis. We will never fully understand the issues in this cosmic battle over worship unless we understand the significance of Creation. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1

**The Beginning of the World 1 In the beginning God created the sky and the earth.**

). This verse is the foundation of all of Scripture. “In the beginning God created.” The Hebrew word for “create” in this passage is bara’, a verb that is used exclusively with God Himself as the subject. To get just a small idea of how unlimited God’s power is, let’s consider just one object of His creation: the sun. The sun produces more energy in one second than humanity has produced by oil, gas, coal, or fire since the beginning of time. The sun has a diameter of approximately 865,000 miles and could hold 1 million planets the size of earth. But the sun is just one of at least 100 billion stars in our galaxy, the Milky Way. One star, called the Pistol Star, gives off as much as 10 million times the power generated by our sun. One million stars the size of our sun could easily fit within the sphere of the Pistol Star. How do we even begin to wrap our minds around the enormity of creation? Creation reveals a God of awesome might and unlimited power. His creative power not only brought the heavens and earth into existence but has also worked on behalf of His people through the centuries. He is the God who began this world, who is ever-present in this world, and who will never forsake His people in this world. Journal: How does the overwhelming size of the Creation only amplify the reality of God’s love? How does it affect your faith to know that God personally listens to each of us and cares deeply about each of our troubles?

inTerpret

The Transcendent and Immanent Creator and Redeemer  
The God of Creation, who brought the sun, moon, and stars into existence, whose awesome power created this planet and filled it with living things, is also a God who is interested in each one of us. He is the God who delivered His people from Egyptian bondage, who guided them in their wilderness wanderings, who rained manna out of heaven, who caused the walls of Jericho to collapse, and who defeated Israel’s enemies. The same God who unleashed His infinite power to create the universe unleashes that infinite power to defeat the forces of evil that wage the battles for our souls. Theologians talk about the transcendence of God, the idea that God exists above and over all of creation. But they also talk about the immanence of God, which is the idea that God somehow also exists within our world and, as biblical history shows, is intricately and intimately involved in it. Though the Lord dwells in a “high and holy place,” He is also “with him who has a contrite and humble spirit” (Isa. 57:15

**15  And this is the reason: God lives forever and is holy. He is high and lifted up. He says, “I live in a high and holy place, but I also live with people who are sad and humble. I give new life to those who are humble and to those whose hearts are broken.**

). As Jesus Himself said when speaking of His faithful followers: “I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (John 17:23

**23 I will be in them and you will be in me so that they will be completely one. Then the world will know that you sent me and that you loved them just as much as you loved me.**

). It doesn’t get closer and more intimate than that. The great news about our God is that His greatness and power are so vast that they reach across the cosmos and into each of our lives. He promises to remake us, mold us, transform us into the likeness of His image. Think about what that means. The God who created and sustains billions of galaxies is the same God in whom we not only “live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28

**28 ‘By his power we live and move and exist.’ Some of your own poets have said: ‘For we are his children.’**

), but who also works in us to give us new hearts, to purge us of sin, and to make us into new creatures in Christ. What a powerfully comforting thought to realize that our God, a God of such power, loves and cares for us. Now reread the first angel’s message. Everlasting gospel. Hour of judgment. Worship the Creator. Look at how closely related these ideas are. When we stand before our Creator in judgment, it’s only the gospel that gives us any hope at all. “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Rom. 8:1

**Be Ruled by the Spirit 8 So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty. n**

). No condemnation now, and certainly not in the judgment. The message of God as Creator is central to present truth, especially when evolution, even when dressed up in “Christian” garb, threatens to destroy the entire foundation of the Christian faith. Yet amid the onslaught of evolutionary thought, God has raised up a church, a people whose very name itself is a witness against the idea of evolution—a people who are to proclaim the foundational truth of God as our Creator and Redeemer. Look at how closely tied Jesus as Creator is to Jesus as Redeemer in Ephesians 3:9

**9 And God gave me the work of telling all people about the plan for his secret, which has been hidden in him since the beginning of time. He is the One who created everything.**

, Colossians 1:13–17

**13 God has freed us from the power of darkness, and he brought us into the kingdom of his dear Son. 14 The Son paid for our sins, n and in him we have forgiveness. The Importance of Christ 15 No one can see God, but Jesus Christ is exactly like him. He ranks higher than everything that has been made. 16 Through his power all things were made—things in heaven and on earth, things seen and unseen, all powers, authorities, lords, and rulers. All things were made through Christ and for Christ. 17 He was there before anything was made, and all things continue because of him.**

, Revelation 4:11

**11  “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you made all things. Everything existed and was made, because you wanted it.”**

, and Romans 5:17–19

**17 One man sinned, and so death ruled all people because of that one man. But now those people who accept God’s full grace and the great gift of being made right with him will surely have true life and rule through the one man, Jesus Christ. 18 So as one sin of Adam brought the punishment of death to all people, one good act that Christ did makes all people right with God. And that brings true life for all. 19 One man disobeyed God, and many became sinners. In the same way, one man obeyed God, and many will be made right.**

. The moment His role as Creator is diminished, as evolution inevitably does, His role as our Redeemer comes into question as well. Why would Jesus redeem us from sin, death, suffering, and violence when sin, death, suffering, and violence are, as evolution teaches, the very means of creation itself? God redeems us from the very process He used to create us to begin with? It’s a dangerous lie. And what makes it even worse is that evolution mocks the very idea of Jesus’ death on the cross. Paul (see Rom. 5:17–19

**17 One man sinned, and so death ruled all people because of that one man. But now those people who accept God’s full grace and the great gift of being made right with him will surely have true life and rule through the one man, Jesus Christ. 18 So as one sin of Adam brought the punishment of death to all people, one good act that Christ did makes all people right with God. And that brings true life for all. 19 One man disobeyed God, and many became sinners. In the same way, one man obeyed God, and many will be made right.**

) inseparably links the introduction of sin by Adam to the death of Jesus. There’s a direct link, then, between Adam and Jesus. In any evolutionary model, however, no sinless Adam could have introduced death, because death—millions of years of death—was supposedly the force and power needed to create Adam to begin with. Right from the start, evolution destroys the biblical foundation of the cross. In contrast, Seventh-day Adventists, by calling the world to worship the Creator, stand as living witnesses against this error. Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?How can we learn to draw hope and comfort from understanding the immanence of God? Or does it scare you because God knows your darkest secrets? How should the gospel give you peace in that context?

inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Revelation 4:11

**11  “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you made all things. Everything existed and was made, because you wanted it.”**

? 2 Corinthians 5:17

**17 If anyone belongs to Christ, there is a new creation. The old things have gone; everything is made new!**

Psalm 139:15–18

**15  You saw my bones being formed as I took shape in my mother’s body. When I was put together there, 16  you saw my body as it was formed. All the days planned for me were written in your book before I was one day old. 17  God, your thoughts are precious to me. They are so many! 18  If I could count them, they would be more than all the grains of sand. When I wake up, I am still with you.**

Acts 17:26–29

**26 God began by making one person, and from him came all the different people who live everywhere in the world. God decided exactly when and where they must live. 27 God wanted them to look for him and perhaps search all around for him and find him, though he is not far from any of us: 28 ‘By his power we live and move and exist.’ Some of your own poets have said: ‘For we are his children.’ 29 Since we are God’s children, you must not think that God is like something that people imagine or make from gold, silver, or rock.**

Colossians 1:15–20

**The Importance of Christ 15 No one can see God, but Jesus Christ is exactly like him. He ranks higher than everything that has been made. 16 Through his power all things were made—things in heaven and on earth, things seen and unseen, all powers, authorities, lords, and rulers. All things were made through Christ and for Christ. 17 He was there before anything was made, and all things continue because of him. 18 He is the head of the body, which is the church. Everything comes from him. He is the first one who was raised from the dead. So in all things Jesus has first place. 19 God was pleased for all of himself to live in Christ. 20 And through Christ, God has brought all things back to himself again—things on earth and things in heaven. God made peace through the blood of Christ’s death on the cross.**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 4:11

**11  “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you made all things. Everything existed and was made, because you wanted it.”**

?

inVite

The Creator on the Cross  
However much we can and do marvel and worship the Lord as our Creator, there’s more to His nature. As we have already seen (but what is worth looking at again), our Creator is also our Redeemer. The God who created us is the same God who redeemed us. The God who said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness” (Gen. 1:26

**26 Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image and likeness. And let them rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the tame animals, over all the earth, and over all the small crawling animals on the earth.”**

) is the same one who, on the cross, cried out, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” That is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matt. 27:46

**46 About three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” This means, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”**

). Talk about a reason to fear God and, even more so, to give glory to Him and to worship Him! How can we, as fallen human beings, adequately respond to such an amazing truth as this? What can we possibly do in response? We are told, in the first angel’s message, what to do: “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” (Rev. 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

). Read John 19:16–30

**16 So Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified. Jesus Is Crucified The soldiers took charge of Jesus. 17 Carrying his own cross, Jesus went out to a place called The Place of the Skull, which in the Hebrew language n is called Golgotha. 18 There they crucified Jesus. They also crucified two other men, one on each side, with Jesus in the middle. 19 Pilate wrote a sign and put it on the cross. It read: jesus of nazareth, the king of the jews. 20 The sign was written in Hebrew, in Latin, and in Greek. Many of the people read the sign, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. 21 The leading priests said to Pilate, “Don’t write, ‘The King of the Jews.’ But write, ‘This man said, “I am the King of the Jews.” ’ ” 22 Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.” 23 After the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, with each soldier getting one part. They also took his long shirt, which was all one piece of cloth, woven from top to bottom. 24 So the soldiers said to each other, “We should not tear this into parts. Let’s throw lots to see who will get it.” This happened so that this Scripture would come true: “They divided my clothes among them, and they threw lots for my clothing.” Psalm 22:18 So the soldiers did this. 25 Standing near his cross were Jesus’ mother, his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw his mother and the follower he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Dear woman, here is your son.” 27 Then he said to the follower, “Here is your mother.” From that time on, the follower took her to live in his home. Jesus Dies 28 After this, Jesus knew that everything had been done. So that the Scripture would come true, he said, “I am thirsty.” n 29 There was a jar full of vinegar there, so the soldiers soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a branch of a hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ mouth. 30 When Jesus tasted the vinegar, he said, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and died.**

, John’s account of Jesus on the cross. As you read it, think of the Bible texts that we have looked at about Jesus as Creator, as the one by whom “all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him” (Col. 1:16

**16 Through his power all things were made—things in heaven and on earth, things seen and unseen, all powers, authorities, lords, and rulers. All things were made through Christ and for Christ.**

). The first angel’s message to worship the Creator came after the cross—after it had become known to the onlooking universe and to Christ’s followers that the One who “made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” is the same One who, though being God, took “the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:7

**7  But he gave up his place with God and made himself nothing. He was born as a man and became like a servant.**

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**8  And when he was living as a man, he humbled himself and was fully obedient to God, even when that caused his death—death on a cross.**

). “Worship addresses the most fundamental aspect of human existence in that it has to do with what humans as living creatures should do when confronted by the presence of the Creator. . . . Only those who are alive can worship the Lord; the dead cannot praise and worship Him. . . . The One who created us invites us to surrender our lives in the act of worship in order to receive them back from Him enriched, to be used for the benefit of others. Worship has to do with the very nature and purpose of our existence and with the need for having a center outside of ourselves that frees us from selfishness. Not to worship God is to lose our reason for existence; it is to exist in a state of disorientation and therefore to be dying, heading to total extinction because we are disconnected from the very source of life” (Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “The Closing of the Cosmic Conflict: Role of the Three Angels’ Messages,” unpublished manuscript, 42). What an amazing spectacle that must have been to those who knew Jesus before He came to earth as a human being. No wonder heavenly beings worship Him as well. As for us, redeemed by His blood, what else can we do but worship our Creator and Redeemer? Journal: Meditate on Revelation 4:11

**11  “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you made all things. Everything existed and was made, because you wanted it.”**

again and look for where Jesus is.In light of the cross, why is the idea of fallen human beings being able to add anything to what Christ did on the cross such a heretical idea? Which of our works could add to what the Creator has already done for us? How do you see Jesus differently in the light of this week’s lesson?

inSight

Creatorship  
Did Christ die to let loose the whole of humanity to worship idols instead of God, when the commandment said, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve”? And “the Lord made heaven and earth,” and what then? “And rested the seventh day” and “sanctified it,” and gave it to you to observe as God’s memorial—a memorial that He is the living God who created the heavens overhead and the earth upon which we stand. He made the lofty trees and put the covering upon every flower. He gave to each one its tints, and the Lord of heaven made human beings and gave them the Sabbath. What for? For all the posterity of Adam; it was a gift to all his posterity. If they had always obeyed the fourth commandment there never would have been an infidel in the world, because it testified that “the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is.”. . . His hands are over His created works. Can you wonder that the devil wants to make void the law of God, the standard of His character? It will be the standard in the judgment when the books shall be opened and every person judged according to the deeds that are done. And the names are written—what does He say?—engraven “upon the palms of my hands.” The marks of the crucifixion have engraven them. Humans are His property, and they are God’s by creation and by redemption. . . . What do we give to Satan when we concede the point that the law of God needs to be taken away? We give the whole creative universe a defective God, a God that made a law and it was so defective that He had to take it away. That is all Satan wants. Can we afford to be working on any side but that of God? (Ellen G. White, Christ Triumphant [Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1999], 15.) By the first angel, men are called upon to “fear God, and give glory to him” and to worship Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must obey His law. Says the wise man: “Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.” Ecclesiastes 12:13

**13  Now, everything has been heard, so I give my final advice: Honor God and obey his commands, because this is all people must do.**

. Without obedience to His commandments no worship can be pleasing to God. “This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.” 1 John 5:3

**3 Loving God means obeying his commands. And God’s commands are not too hard for us,**

; Proverbs 28:9

**9  If you refuse to obey what you have been taught, your prayers will not be heard.**

. The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power. “All the gods of the nations are idols: but the Lord made the heavens.” Psalm 96:5

**5  because all the gods of the nations are only idols, but the Lord made the heavens.**

. “To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things.” “Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it: . . . I am the Lord; and there is none else.” Isaiah 40:25

**25  God, the Holy One, says, “Can you compare me to anyone? Is anyone equal to me?”**

, 26

**26  Look up to the skies. Who created all these stars? He leads out the army of heaven one by one and calls all the stars by name. Because he is strong and powerful, not one of them is missing.**

; 45:18

**18  The Lord created the heavens. He is the God who formed the earth and made it. He did not want it to be empty, but he wanted life on the earth. This is what the Lord says: “I am the Lord. There is no other God.**

. Says the psalmist: “Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves.” “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.” Psalms 100:3

**3  Know that the Lordis God. He made us, and we belong to him; we are his people, the sheep he tends.**

; 95:6

**6  Come, let’s worship him and bow down. Let’s kneel before the Lord who made us,**

. And the holy beings who worship God in heaven state, as the reason why their homage is due to Him: “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things.” Revelation 4:11

**11  “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you made all things. Everything existed and was made, because you wanted it.”**

. In Revelation 14, men are called upon to worship the Creator; and the prophecy brings to view a class that, as the result of the threefold message, are keeping the commandments of God. One of these commandments points directly to God as the Creator. The fourth precept declares: “The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” Exodus 20:10

**10 but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities.**

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**11 The reason is that in six days the Lord made everything—the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. On the seventh day he rested. So the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

. Concerning the Sabbath, the Lord says, further, that it is “a sign, . . . that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.” Ezekiel 20:20

**20 Keep my Sabbaths holy, and they will be a sign between me and you. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.”**

. And the reason given is: “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.” Exodus 31:17

**17 The Sabbath day will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, because in six days I, the Lord, made the sky and the earth. On the seventh day I did not work; I rested.’ ”**

. “The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God”—because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. “The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.”—J. N. Andrews, History of the Sabbath, chapter 27. It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man’s thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, “Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment. (Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911], 436–438.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, what are some decisions that must be made in your personal life?What are some public decisions you must make in your social circles?Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

How is the biblical understanding of Creation different from a deistic understanding of it? Why is this difference so important?Why is being created by God not enough for humanity? Why does humanity also need the promise and fulfillment of redemption?How have you personally experienced God’s love through His creative power working in your life?How does the reality that God created the entire cosmos comfort you? How does it humble you?What does it say about God if He used evolutionary methods such as death, violence, destruction, suffering, and mass extinction to “create” humanity?How does this week’s study impact your private and public worship of God?

THE SABBATH AND THE END

inTro

Of Immense Value  
Read This Week’s Passage: Exodus 20:8–11 and Deuteronomy 5:12–15

**Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work;but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy, as Jehovah thy God commanded thee.Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work;but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou.And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.**

Of Immense Value The essence of humanity’s dignity is a common creation. The fact that we are uniquely created by God places value on every human being. The unborn in the mother’s womb, the quadriplegic teenager, the young adult with Down syndrome, and the Alzheimer-afflicted grandmother all have immense value to God. He is their Father. They are His sons and daughters. “God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. . . . And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth” (Acts 17:24–26

**24 The God who made the whole world and everything in it is the Lord of the land and the sky. He does not live in temples built by human hands. 25 This God is the One who gives life, breath, and everything else to people. He does not need any help from them; he has everything he needs. 26 God began by making one person, and from him came all the different people who live everywhere in the world. God decided exactly when and where they must live.**

). Ours is a shared heritage. We belong to the same family. We are brothers and sisters fashioned, shaped, and molded by the same God. Creation provides a true sense of self-worth. When the genes and chromosomes came together to form the unique biological structure of your personality, God threw away the pattern. There is no one else like you in all the universe. You are unique, a one-of-a-kind creation, a being of such immense value that the God who created the cosmos took upon Himself our fleshly bodies and offered Himself as a sacrifice for you and your sins!

inGest

The Judgment and the Sabbath  
If we are merely a collection of randomly formed cells, nothing more than the product of chance and an advanced ape, then life has little meaning beyond mere survival. If we are merely one of the estimated 8 billion people clawing at one another for living space on a planet called earth, life loses its purpose. In contrast, the biblical Creation provides a reason to live and a moral imperative for living. We have been created by God and are accountable to Him for our actions. The One who made us holds us responsible. He has established absolutes, even in a world of moral relativism. The message of the three angels flying in midair in Revelation 14 announces that “the hour of His judgment has come” (verse 7). Since we were created by God with the capacity to make moral choices, we are responsible for the decisions we make. If we were merely a random collection of cells, products of our heredity and environment alone, our actions would largely be determined by forces over which we have no control. However, judgment implies moral responsibility. In this crisis hour of earth’s history, the judgment hour, God calls us to make decisions in light of eternity. The first angel’s earnest appeal to “worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of waters” (verse 7) acknowledges that the basis of all worship is the fact that we were created by God. Meanwhile, our adherence to the seventh-day Sabbath demonstrates our belief that Jesus is worthy to be worshiped as our Creator. It reveals our acceptance of His law as divinely inspired principles for living life to the fullest. Because the law is the foundation of God’s government and is a revelation of His character, it becomes the standard of judgment. Our faithfulness to the Sabbath commandment is an acknowledgment of our commitment to live according to His principles. It is because our world so desperately needs the reassuring message of Creation that God gave us the Sabbath. In the mid-1800s, when the evolutionary hypothesis was taking the intellectual world by storm, God sent a message of incredible hope. We have been studying this message, found in Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

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**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

. Satan has made every attempt to distort the idea of Creation because he hates Jesus and does not want Him to receive the worship He is due as our Creator and Redeemer. The Sabbath is at the center of the great controversy over Christ’s worthiness to receive worship as our Creator. God’s last-day message is one that calls all humanity back to worshiping Christ as the Creator of heaven and earth. The basis of all worship is the fact that He created us. Sabbath is a symbol of our rest in Him, and it is a special sign of loyalty to the Creator (Ezek. 20:12

**12 I also gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between us so they would know that I am the Lord who made them holy.**

, 20

**20 Keep my Sabbaths holy, and they will be a sign between me and you. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.”**

). Rather than an arbitrary legalistic requirement, it reveals that true rest from righteousness by works is found in Him. The Sabbath speaks of a God who has achieved for us what we could never do for ourselves. Scripture calls us to rest in His love and care each Sabbath. The Sabbath day is a symbol of rest, not works; of grace, not legalism; of assurance, not condemnation; of dependence upon Him, not ourselves. Each Sabbath we rejoice in His goodness and praise Him for the salvation that can be found only in Christ. The Sabbath is also the eternal link between the perfection of Eden in the past and the glory of the new heavens and the new earth in the future (Isa. 65:17

**A New Time Is Coming 17  “Look, I will make new heavens and a new earth, and people will not remember the past or think about those things.**

; Rev. 21:1

**The New Jerusalem 21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had disappeared, and there was no sea anymore.**

). It calls us back to our roots; it’s a link to our family of origin. The Sabbath has been continuously observed since time began. It is an unbroken connection back through time to our creation, and therefore keeps us focused on the glorious truth that we are children of God. It invites us into an intimate, close relationship with Him. Journal: Think about how our society operates based on moral relativism. What does biblical judgment imply about issues such as accountability and responsibility? How does the overwhelming size of the Creation only amplify the reality of God’s love? Think about how it shows that despite how small we are compared to the Creation, Christ died for us anyway.

inTerpret

Deception and Usurpation  
In an attempt to destroy the uniqueness of our creation, the devil has introduced a not-so-subtle counterfeit. The counterfeit, accepted by even some among us, goes like this: God is the prime cause of Creation, but He took long ages to bring life into existence because He used evolution to do it. This approach attempts to harmonize scientific “data” with the Genesis account. It asserts that the days of Creation were long, indefinite periods of time and that life on earth is billions of years old. The biblical account is clear: God “spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast” (Ps. 33:9

**9  He spoke, and it happened. He commanded, and it appeared.**

; see also Heb. 11:3

**3 It is by faith we understand that the whole world was made by God’s command so what we see was made by something that cannot be seen.**

). The first chapter of Genesis affirms that God created the world in six literal days of 24 hours each and rested on the seventh. The linguistic structure of Genesis 1 and 2 does not permit anything else. Even scholars who don’t believe in the literal six-day Creation acknowledge that the author’s intent was to teach the six-day Creation. The Hebrew word for “day” in Genesis 1 is yom. Throughout the Bible, every time a number modifies the word yom as an adjective (third day, first day, etc.), it limits the time period to 24 hours. Without exception, it is always a 24-hour period. Additionally, and to the immediate point, if God did not create the world in six literal days, what significance does the seventh-day Sabbath have? Why would God command it? It would make absolutely no sense at all to leave the Sabbath as an eternal legacy of a six-day Creation week if a six-day Creation week never existed to begin with. To accept long ages of creation is to challenge the very need for the seventh-day Sabbath. It also raises serious questions regarding the integrity of Scripture. By attacking the Sabbath, Satan is challenging the very heart of God’s authority, and what could be more effective in destroying the memorial of the six-day Creation than by denying the reality of the six-day Creation? No wonder so many people, Christians included, ignore the seventh-day Sabbath. What a setup for the final deception. The great controversy, which began in heaven millennia ago, is over the question of God’s authority. In the last days the central issue in the conflict between good and evil, Christ and Satan, is worship. Do we worship the Creator or the beast? And because Creation forms the ground of all our beliefs (after all, what do we believe that makes any sense apart from God as our Creator?), the seventh-day Sabbath, embedded in the Genesis Creation account itself (Gen. 2:1–3

**The Seventh Day—Rest 2 So the sky, the earth, and all that filled them were finished. 2 By the seventh day God finished the work he had been doing, so he rested from all his work. 3 God blessed the seventh day and made it a holy day, because on that day he rested from all the work he had done in creating the world.**

), stands as the eternal and immutable sign of that Creation. It’s the simplest symbol of the simplest teaching. The only thing more fundamental to it is God Himself. Hence, to usurp the seventh-day Sabbath is to usurp the Lord’s authority at the most prime level possible, that of Him as Creator. It’s to get behind everything and uproot it at the core. It is, indeed, to seek to take the place of God Himself (2 Thess. 2:4

**4 He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God’s Temple and sit there and say that he is God.**

). Of course, the real issue in the last days is our love and loyalty to Jesus, but according to the Bible, this love is expressed in obedience to the commandments (1 John 5:3

**3 Loving God means obeying his commands. And God’s commands are not too hard for us,**

; Rev. 14:12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

)—and the Sabbath alone among the commandments gets behind everything because it alone points to God as Creator (Exod. 20:8–11

**8 “Remember to keep the Sabbath holy. 9 Work and get everything done during six days each week, 10 but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities. 11 The reason is that in six days the Lord made everything—the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. On the seventh day he rested. So the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

). No wonder it will be the outward symbol of the final divide between those who worship the Lord and those who worship the beast (Rev. 14:11

**11 And the smoke from their burning pain will rise forever and ever. There will be no rest, day or night, for those who worship the beast and his idol or who get the mark of his name.”**

, 12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

). Considering how fundamental the Sabbath is to everything else, it’s hard to see how the final issue of worshiping the Creator could be about anything else. “The reason provided . . . to worship God is that He is the Creator. In the heavenly liturgy, celestial beings expressed the idea in a very succinct way: ‘For You created all things’ ([Rev.] 4:11). On earth, God’s creatorship needs to be emphasized as much as possible, so the angel says, ‘Worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters’ ([Rev.] 14:7, NKJV). It has been correctly indicated that the angel is using the language of the fourth commandment to justify the call to worship God (Exod. 20:11

**11 The reason is that in six days the Lord made everything—the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. On the seventh day he rested. So the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

). . . . “Within the Decalogue the Sabbath commandment stands as its seal in that it identifies who God is—the Creator; confirms the territory over which He rules—everything He created; and reveals His right to rule—for He created everything. In order for the dragon to succeed, he had somehow to set aside this memorial” (Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “The Closing of the Cosmic Conflict: Role of the Three Angels’ Messages,” unpublished manuscript, 40, 41). Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?How are the judgment, the commandments of God, and worship linked?

inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with the Sabbath and the end? Psalm 33:6

**6  The sky was made at the Lord’s command. By the breath from his mouth, he made all the stars.**

, 9

**9  He spoke, and it happened. He commanded, and it appeared.**

James 2:8–13

**8 This royal law is found in the Scriptures: “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.” n If you obey this law, you are doing right. 9 But if you treat one person as being more important than another, you are sinning. You are guilty of breaking God’s law. 10 A person who follows all of God’s law but fails to obey even one command is guilty of breaking all the commands in that law. 11 The same God who said, “You must not be guilty of adultery,” n also said, “You must not murder anyone.” n So if you do not take part in adultery but you murder someone, you are guilty of breaking all of God’s law. 12 In everything you say and do, remember that you will be judged by the law that makes people free. 13 So you must show mercy to others, or God will not show mercy to you when he judges you. But the person who shows mercy can stand without fear at the judgment.**

2 Peter 3:13

**13 But God made a promise to us, and we are waiting for a new heaven and a new earth where goodness lives.**

Revelation 21:1

**The New Jerusalem 21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had disappeared, and there was no sea anymore.**

Romans 14:10

**10 So why do you judge your brothers or sisters in Christ? And why do you think you are better than they are? We will all stand before God to be judged,**

Hebrews 11:3

**3 It is by faith we understand that the whole world was made by God’s command so what we see was made by something that cannot be seen.**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Exodus 20:8–11

**8 “Remember to keep the Sabbath holy. 9 Work and get everything done during six days each week, 10 but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities. 11 The reason is that in six days the Lord made everything—the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. On the seventh day he rested. So the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

and Deuteronomy 5:12–15

**12 “Keep the Sabbath as a holy day, as the Lord your God has commanded you. 13 You may work and get everything done during six days each week, 14 but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your ox, your donkey, or any of your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities. That way your servants may rest as you do. 15 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there by his great power and strength. So the Lord your God has commanded you to rest on the Sabbath day.**

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inVite

The Sabbath and Eternal Rest  
The Sabbath is a place of refuge in a weary world. Every week, we leave the cares of this world and enter God’s retreat center: the Sabbath. In his work The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man, famed Jewish author Abraham Heschel calls it “a palace in time” ([New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005], 12). Each seventh day, God’s heavenly palace descends from heaven to earth, and the Lord invites us into the glory of His presence for this 24-hour period to spend a time of intimate fellowship with Him. In the introduction to Heschel’s book on the beauty and solemnity of the Sabbath, Susannah Heschel, his daughter, writes of the significance of the Sabbath in these words: “The Sabbath is a metaphor for paradise and a testimony to God’s presence; in our prayers, we anticipate a messianic era that will be a Sabbath, and each Shabbat prepares us for that experience: Unless one learns how to relish the taste of Sabbath . . . one will be unable to enjoy the taste of eternity in the world to come” (XV). At Creation, Jesus built a special dwelling for us. We can find refuge there. We can be safe there. His work is complete. It is finished. When we rest on the Sabbath, we are resting in His loving care. We are resting in anticipation of our eternal rest in the new heavens and the new earth that is soon to come. The same God who created the earth the first time will create a new one, and the Sabbath remains an eternal reminder of Him as the Creator (see Isa. 66:23

**23 All people will come to worship me every Sabbath and every New Moon,” says the Lord.**

). In fact, the Jews saw the Sabbath as a symbol, a foretaste of what in Hebrew was called the olam haba, the world to come. The message of three angels flying through the heavens commanding to worship the Creator is heaven’s answer to the hopeless despair of many in the twenty-first century. It points us to our Creator, the one who first made all things, and to our Redeemer, the one who will, after the judgment, after sin is eradicated, make all things new. “Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful’ ” (Rev. 21:5

**5 The One who was sitting on the throne said, “Look! I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted.”**

). Journal: Meditate on Exodus 20:8–11

**8 “Remember to keep the Sabbath holy. 9 Work and get everything done during six days each week, 10 but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities. 11 The reason is that in six days the Lord made everything—the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. On the seventh day he rested. So the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

and Deuteronomy 5:12–15

**12 “Keep the Sabbath as a holy day, as the Lord your God has commanded you. 13 You may work and get everything done during six days each week, 14 but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your ox, your donkey, or any of your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities. That way your servants may rest as you do. 15 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there by his great power and strength. So the Lord your God has commanded you to rest on the Sabbath day.**

again and look for where Jesus is.How can you personally make the Sabbath a foretaste of heaven in your own life and in your family?How do you see Jesus differently in the light of this week’s lesson?

inSight

The Seventh Day and the Last Days  
I cannot too strongly urge all our church members, all who are true missionaries, all who believe the third angel’s message, all who turn away their feet from the Sabbath, to consider the message of the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. The work of beneficence enjoined in this chapter is the work that God requires His people to do at this time. It is a work of His own appointment. We are not left in doubt as to where the message applies, and the time of its marked fulfillment, for we read: “They that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.” Verse 12. God’s memorial, the seventh-day Sabbath, the sign of His work in creating the world, has been displaced by the man of sin. God’s people have a special work to do in repairing the breach that has been made in His law; and the nearer we approach the end, the more urgent this work becomes. All who love God will show that they bear His sign by keeping His commandments. They are the restorers of paths to dwell in. The Lord says: “If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, . . . then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth.” Verses 13, 14. Thus genuine medical missionary work is bound up inseparably with the keeping of God’s commandments, of which the Sabbath is especially mentioned, since it is the great memorial of God’s creative work. Its observance is bound up with the work of restoring the moral image of God in man. This is the ministry which God’s people are to carry forward at this time. This ministry, rightly performed, will bring rich blessings to the church. (Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948], vol. 6, 265, 266.) The law of God, through the agency of Satan, is to be made void. In our land of boasted freedom religious liberty will come to an end. The contest will be decided over the Sabbath question, which will agitate the whole world.—Ev 236 (1875). A great crisis awaits the people of God. Very soon our nation will attempt to enforce upon all the observance of the first day of the week as a sacred day. In doing this they will not scruple to compel men against the voice of their own conscience to observe the day the nation declares to be the Sabbath.—RH Extra, Dec. 11, 1888. Seventh-day Adventists will fight the battle over the seventh-day Sabbath. The authorities in the United States and in other countries will rise up in their pride and power and make laws to restrict religious liberty.—MS 78, 1897. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.—GC 588 (1911). (Ellen G. White, Last Day Events [Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1992], 144.) Wonderful events are soon to open before the world. The end of all things is at hand. The time of trouble is about to come upon the people of God. Then it is that the decree will go forth forbidding those who keep the Sabbath of the Lord to buy or sell, threatening them with punishment, and even death, if they do not observe the first day of the week as the Sabbath. The decree which is to go forth against the people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews in the time of Esther. . . . Satan instigated the scheme in order to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God. But his plots were defeated by a counterpower that reigns among the children of men. . . . The Protestant world today see in the little company keeping the Sabbath a Mordecai in the gate. His character and conduct, expressing reverence for the law of God, are a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling upon His Sabbath; the unwelcome intruder must by some means be put out of the way. The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful in ages past is still seeking to rid the earth of those who fear God and obey His law. Satan will excite indignation against the humble minority who conscientiously refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. . . . Not having a “Thus saith the Scriptures” to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. . . . On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Now, as in the days of Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people. (Ellen G. White, Maranatha [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1976], 198.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, what are new revelations in your spiritual life?What are some ways to make these revelations more practically relevant?Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

Why is the idea of fallen humans being able to add anything to what Christ did on the cross such a heretical idea?How does the Sabbath commandment reveal the link between Creation and Redemption?How is the Sabbath commandment hinted at in Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

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**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

, and why is it important to our end-time message?How does our understanding of Creation influence our behavior?What relationship do heredity and environment have with the daily choices we make?How can we, by God’s grace, overcome character defects that we didn’t choose to have?How does the message of the Sabbath answer the great questions of life, such as where we came from, why we’re here, and what our eternal destiny is?Without exception, the prime memorial of the Creation, the Sabbath, comes to us (as opposed to us going to it) every week. What should that tell us about how important the doctrine of Creation is? How do we show someone who believes in millions or even billions of years of evolution as the means of creation the irrationality of keeping the seventh-day Sabbath as a memorial to that creation?

A CITY CALLED CONFUSION

inTro

Of Suns and Scarlet  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 17

**And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls, and spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of the great harlot that sitteth upon many waters;with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and they that dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication.And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication,and upon her forehead a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered with a great wonder.And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou wonder? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and the ten horns.The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition. And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose name hath not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast, how that he was, and is not, and shall come.Here is the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth:and they are seven kings; the five are fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a little while.And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goeth into perdition.And the ten horns that thou sawest are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet; but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour.These have one mind, and they give their power and authority unto the beast.These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him, called and chosen and faithful.And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.And the ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her utterly with fire.For God did put in their hearts to do his mind, and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished.And the woman whom thou sawest is the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.**

Of Suns and ScarletThe great controversy theme is summarized in Revelation using the symbolism of two women, one clothed with the sun (Rev. 12

**The Woman and the Dragon 12 And then a great wonder appeared in heaven: A woman was clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars was on her head. 2 She was pregnant and cried out with pain, because she was about to give birth. 3 Then another wonder appeared in heaven: There was a giant red dragon with seven heads and seven crowns on each head. He also had ten horns. 4 His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and threw them down to the earth. He stood in front of the woman who was ready to give birth so he could eat her baby as soon as it was born. 5 Then the woman gave birth to a son who will rule all the nations with an iron rod. And her child was taken up to God and to his throne. 6 The woman ran away into the desert to a place God prepared for her where she would be taken care of for one thousand two hundred sixty days. 7 Then there was a war in heaven. Michael n and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. 8 But the dragon was not strong enough, and he and his angels lost their place in heaven. 9 The giant dragon was thrown down out of heaven. (He is that old snake called the devil or Satan, who tricks the whole world.) The dragon with his angels was thrown down to the earth. 10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying: “The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have now come. The accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accused them day and night before our God, has been thrown down. 11  And our brothers and sisters defeated him by the blood of the Lamb’s death and by the message they preached. They did not love their lives so much that they were afraid of death. 12  So rejoice, you heavens and all who live there! But it will be terrible for the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you! He is filled with anger, because he knows he does not have much time.” 13 When the dragon saw he had been thrown down to the earth, he hunted for the woman who had given birth to the son. 14 But the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle so she could fly to the place prepared for her in the desert. There she would be taken care of for three and one-half years, away from the snake. 15 Then the snake poured water out of its mouth like a river toward the woman so the flood would carry her away. 16 But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that came from the mouth of the dragon. 17 Then the dragon was very angry at the woman, and he went off to make war against all her other children—those who obey God’s commands and who have the message Jesus taught. 18 And the dragon n stood on the seashore.**

) and one dressed in scarlet (Rev. 17

**The Woman on the Animal 17 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke to me. He said, “Come, and I will show you the punishment that will be given to the great prostitute, the one sitting over many waters. 2 The kings of the earth sinned sexually with her, and the people of the earth became drunk from the wine of her sexual sin.” 3 Then the angel carried me away by the Spirit to the desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a red beast. It was covered with names against God written on it, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was dressed in purple and red and was shining with the gold, precious jewels, and pearls she was wearing. She had a golden cup in her hand, a cup filled with evil things and the uncleanness of her sexual sin. 5 On her forehead a title was written that was secret. This is what was written: the great babylon mother of prostitutes and of the evil things of the earth 6 Then I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God’s holy people and with the blood of those who were killed because of their faith in Jesus. When I saw the woman, I was very amazed. 7 Then the angel said to me, “Why are you amazed? I will tell you the secret of this woman and the beast she rides—the one with seven heads and ten horns. 8 The beast you saw was once alive but is not alive now. But soon it will come up out of the bottomless pit and go away to be destroyed. There are people who live on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life since the beginning of the world. They will be amazed when they see the beast, because he was once alive, is not alive now, but will come again. 9 “You need a wise mind to understand this. The seven heads on the beast are seven mountains where the woman sits. 10 And they are seven kings. Five of the kings have already been destroyed, one of the kings lives now, and another has not yet come. When he comes, he must stay a short time. 11 The beast that was once alive, but is not alive now, is also an eighth king. He belongs to the first seven kings, and he will go away to be destroyed. 12 “The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet begun to rule, but they will receive power to rule with the beast for one hour. 13 All ten of these kings have the same purpose, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. 14 They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. He will defeat them with his called, chosen, and faithful followers.” 15 Then the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, races, nations, and languages. 16 The ten horns and the beast you saw will hate the prostitute. They will take everything she has and leave her naked. They will eat her body and burn her with fire. 17 God made the ten horns want to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until what God has said comes about. 18 The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”**

). The striking symbol of the woman clothed with the sun, the dazzling glory of Christ, is found in Revelation 12. She is faithful to Jesus. She is not defiled by the corruption of false doctrines. Throughout the Bible a pure woman symbolizes the bride of Jesus, or the true church. In Jeremiah 6:2

**2  Jerusalem, I will destroy you, you who are fragile and gentle.**

the prophet says, “I have likened the daughter of Zion to a lovely and delicate woman.” The prophet uses the expression “daughter of Zion,” meaning a faithful woman, to describe God’s people (see also Eph. 5:25–32

**25 Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it 26 to make it belong to God. Christ used the word to make the church clean by washing it with water. 27 He died so that he could give the church to himself like a bride in all her beauty. He died so that the church could be pure and without fault, with no evil or sin or any other wrong thing in it. 28 In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they love their own bodies. The man who loves his wife loves himself. 29 No one ever hates his own body, but feeds and takes care of it. And that is what Christ does for the church, 30 because we are parts of his body. 31 The Scripture says, “So a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two will become one body.” n 32 That secret is very important—I am talking about Christ and the church.**

and Hos. 2:20

**20  I will be true to you as my promised bride, and you will know the Lord.**

).In contrast, the Bible likens apostasy to harlotry or adultery (James 4:4

**4 So, you are not loyal to God! You should know that loving the world is the same as hating God. Anyone who wants to be a friend of the world becomes God’s enemy.**

). Speaking of Israel’s rebellion and unfaithfulness, Ezekiel laments, “You are an adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband” (Ezek. 16:32

**32 “ ‘You are a wife who is guilty of adultery. You desire strangers instead of your husband.**

).In this week’s lesson we will study these two women of Revelation and probe deeper into the conflict between truth and error.

inGest

Dusty, Deadly, and Deceptive  
Down through the centuries God has always had a people who have been faithful to Him. Revelation 12:17

**17 Then the dragon was very angry at the woman, and he went off to make war against all her other children—those who obey God’s commands and who have the message Jesus taught.**

describes their faithfulness as those who “keep the commandments of God,” and also who are elsewhere depicted as “called, and chosen, and faithful” (Rev. 17:14

**14 They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. He will defeat them with his called, chosen, and faithful followers.”**

). John wrote the book of Revelation at the end of the first century. By that time, the ancient city of Babylon was a dust heap, having been destroyed more than a century earlier. In Revelation the ancient city of Babylon is taken to be a type, or symbol, of the end-time Babylon. In the prophecies of Revelation, Babylon represents a false religious system that will have similar characteristics to Old Testament Babylon, a place of extreme moral depravity. The principles that guided ancient Babylon will be the undergirding structure of the modern spiritual Babylon. In Revelation 17:1–6

**The Woman on the Animal 17 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke to me. He said, “Come, and I will show you the punishment that will be given to the great prostitute, the one sitting over many waters. 2 The kings of the earth sinned sexually with her, and the people of the earth became drunk from the wine of her sexual sin.” 3 Then the angel carried me away by the Spirit to the desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a red beast. It was covered with names against God written on it, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was dressed in purple and red and was shining with the gold, precious jewels, and pearls she was wearing. She had a golden cup in her hand, a cup filled with evil things and the uncleanness of her sexual sin. 5 On her forehead a title was written that was secret. This is what was written: the great babylon mother of prostitutes and of the evil things of the earth 6 Then I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God’s holy people and with the blood of those who were killed because of their faith in Jesus. When I saw the woman, I was very amazed.**

, a woman dressed in purple and scarlet rides across the landscape of time on a scarlet-colored beast. The Bible calls her a harlot. She has left Jesus Christ. Here the apostle John gives us a graphic portrayal of an apostate system of religion that has powerful influence in the world. Look at the wording: this power was one with “whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication” (Rev. 17:2

**2 The kings of the earth sinned sexually with her, and the people of the earth became drunk from the wine of her sexual sin.”**

). Drunkenness is always a negative in the Bible, and fornication is symbolic of the false teachings, false doctrine, and immoral practices that characterize wicked societies. The fallen church system has an international reach, influencing people in every corner of the world with her deceptions. Satan is enraged that the gospel will be proclaimed to every “nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Rev. 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

), that this “gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world” (Matt. 24:14

**14 The Good News about God’s kingdom will be preached in all the world, to every nation. Then the end will come.**

), so he employs every possible deception to captivate the minds of the “inhabitants of the earth” (Rev. 17:2

**2 The kings of the earth sinned sexually with her, and the people of the earth became drunk from the wine of her sexual sin.”**

). Revelation 17:2

**2 The kings of the earth sinned sexually with her, and the people of the earth became drunk from the wine of her sexual sin.”**

also declares that she has “committed fornication” with the kings of the earth. Fornication in this context is an illicit union—in the fallen church system, uniting with the state. In the true church system, the church is united with Jesus Christ. The fallen church looks to the political leaders of the earth for power and authority. It seeks the state to enforce its decrees rather than drawing its strength from Jesus as its true head. Revelation 17:2

**2 The kings of the earth sinned sexually with her, and the people of the earth became drunk from the wine of her sexual sin.”**

continues its dramatic portrayal: “And the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” The symbolism of the pure juice of the grape is used throughout the New Testament to represent the untainted, pure blood of Christ poured out for our salvation on the cross (Matt. 26:27–29

**27 Then Jesus took a cup and thanked God for it and gave it to the followers. He said, “Every one of you drink this. 28 This is my blood which is the new n agreement that God makes with his people. This blood is poured out for many to forgive their sins. 29 I tell you this: I will not drink of this fruit of the vine n again until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”**

). In Luke 22:20

**20 In the same way, after supper, Jesus took the cup and said, “This cup is the new agreement that God makes with his people. This new agreement begins with my blood which is poured out for you.**

Jesus says, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood.” When the pure, new wine of the gospel is distorted and the teachings of the Word of God are substituted for the teachings of human religious leaders, it becomes the “wine of Babylon” (see Matt. 15:9

**9  Their worship of me is worthless. The things they teach are nothing but human rules.’ ” Isaiah 29:13**

). Notice, too, that God calls His people out of Babylon. In other words, no matter how corrupt and evil the system is, its reach is so wide that it encompasses, at least for a certain time, His faithful ones, whom He calls “my people” (Rev. 18:4

**4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying: “Come out of that city, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive the disasters that will come to her.**

). Yet the time is coming when God will call them out of that corrupt and evil system, which is about to fall because of its corrupt and evil nature. It is described as the “dwelling place of demons” and the “cage for every unclean and hated bird” (verse 2). Journal: With both leaders and the common people alike negatively influenced by this evil power, what’s our only protection? (Read Eph. 6:10–18

**Wear the Full Armor of God 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his great power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can fight against the devil’s evil tricks. 12 Our fight is not against people on earth but against the rulers and authorities and the powers of this world’s darkness, against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly world. 13 That is why you need to put on God’s full armor. Then on the day of evil you will be able to stand strong. And when you have finished the whole fight, you will still be standing. 14 So stand strong, with the belt of truth tied around your waist and the protection of right living on your chest. 15 On your feet wear the Good News of peace to help you stand strong. 16 And also use the shield of faith with which you can stop all the burning arrows of the Evil One. 17 Accept God’s salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 Pray in the Spirit at all times with all kinds of prayers, asking for everything you need. To do this you must always be ready and never give up. Always pray for all God’s people.**

.)What role do those who proclaim the three angels’ messages have in being used by God to call “my people,” His people, out of Babylon?

inTerpret

Who Is Babylon?  
As we have seen, Revelation 17 describes an apostate religious system that introduces many of the teachings of Old Testament Babylon into Christianity. To better understand the nature of this ancient civilization, Ángel Manuel Rodríguez says, “we need to go back to its first reference in the biblical record, in Genesis. It all began on the plain of the land of Shinar, a region in the southern part of Mesopotamia, today south Iraq, called Babylonia. It is there that the Tower of Babel was built, a symbol of human self-sufficiency, self-preservation, and independence from God ([Gen.] 11:1–4)” (“The Closing of the Cosmic Conflict: Role of the Three Angels’ Messages,” unpublished paper, 43). The Tower of Babel, the site of ancient Babylon, was built in direct defiance to the Word of God. The people built this monument for their own glory, and God consequently confused their languages. The Genesis account puts it this way: “Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth” (Gen. 11:9

**9 The place is called Babel n since that is where the Lord confused the language of the whole world. So the Lord caused them to spread out from there over the whole world.**

). “Babylon” means “confusion.” This system is so evil that it is depicted as being “drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” (Rev. 17:6

**6 Then I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God’s holy people and with the blood of those who were killed because of their faith in Jesus. When I saw the woman, I was very amazed.**

)—horrific images of just how corrupt Babylon is (see also Isa. 49:26

**26  I will force those who trouble you to eat their own flesh. Their own blood will be the wine that makes them drunk. Then everyone will know I, the Lord, am the One who saves you; I am the Powerful One of Jacob who saves you.”**

). In essence, spiritual Babylon represents a religion based on human teachings, established on human ideas, and supported by human traditions. It is a form of human-made religion built by perhaps brilliant human religious leaders, but it stands in direct opposition to the power of the gospel and the church that Jesus built—a church built on love, not violence. The book of Revelation describes these two opposing systems of religion. The first reveals total trust in Jesus and dependence on His Word. The second reveals trust in human authority and dependence of human religious teachers. One is a Christ-centered faith built on total dependence on Christ’s grace, sacrifice, and atonement for salvation, while the other is a humanistic approach to faith that replaces the total dependence on Christ for salvation with a dependence on the traditions of the church. Jeremiah 50 and 51 predict Babylon’s destruction by the Medes and Persians. One of the reasons for Babylon’s demise was their idolatry. The Babylonians believed these images to be representations of their deities. In Babylonian religion the ritual care and worship of the statues of deities was considered sacred, as the gods lived simultaneously in their statues and in the natural forces they embodied. The pillaging or destruction of idols was considered to be loss of divine patronage, exemplified by the story of the Chaldean prince Marduk-apla-iddina II, who, during the Neo-Babylonian period, fled into the southern marshes of Mesopotamia with the statues of Babylon’s gods to save them from the armies of Sennacherib of Assyria (Jane R. McIntosh, Ancient Mesopotamia: New Perspectives [Santa Barbara, Calif.:ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2005], 35–43). The prophets of the Bible contrasted the worship of these lifeless images with the Creator God, who was both alive and lifegiving (Jer. 51:15

**15  “The Lord made the earth by his power. He used his wisdom to build the world and his understanding to stretch out the skies.**

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**16  When he thunders, the waters in the skies roar. He makes clouds rise in the sky all over the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses.**

, 19

**19  But God, who is Jacob’s Portion, is not like the idols. He made everything, and he chose Israel to be his special people. The Lord All-Powerful is his name.**

). Though the issues of spiritual Babylon’s idolatry go deeper than just bowing before images of wood and stone, spiritual Babylon does parallel ancient Babylon in the sense that images were introduced into both of their worship services. The use of images as objects of worship, or “veneration,” is a clear violation of the second commandment not only because the Bible decisively commands us not to engage in idol worship but also because it limits the ability of the Holy Spirit to impress upon our minds the things of eternity and reduces the majesty of God to a lifeless statue. These images were introduced into Christianity in the fourth century to make Christianity more acceptable to the pagan populace. Unfortunately, these images are often given the sacredness and homage that belong to God alone, which makes the whole thing spiritually degrading. Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?How can we protect ourselves from the subtle influences of Babylon, such as the tendency, easy as it is, to depend on ourselves and not wholly on God?

inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Babylon?Matthew 16:18

**18 So I tell you, you are Peter. n On this rock I will build my church, and the power of death will not be able to defeat it.**

Jeremiah 50:33–38

**33 This is what the Lord All-Powerful says: “The people of Israel and Judah are slaves. The enemy took them as prisoners and won’t let them go. 34  But God is strong and will buy them back. His name is the Lord All-Powerful. He will surely defend them with power so he can give rest to their land. But he will not give rest to those living in Babylon.” 35 The Lord says, “Let a sword kill the people living in Babylon and her officers and wise men! 36  Let a sword kill her false prophets, and they will become fools. Let a sword kill her warriors, and they will be full of terror. 37  Let a sword kill her horses and chariots and all the soldiers hired from other countries! Then they will be like frightened women. Let a sword attack her treasures, so they will be taken away. 38  Let a sword attack her waters so they will be dried up. She is a land of idols, and the people go crazy with fear over them.**

Psalm 115:4–8

**4  Their idols are made of silver and gold, the work of human hands. 5  They have mouths, but they cannot speak. They have eyes, but they cannot see. 6  They have ears, but they cannot hear. They have noses, but they cannot smell. 7  They have hands, but they cannot feel. They have feet, but they cannot walk. No sounds come from their throats. 8  People who make idols will be like them, and so will those who trust them.**

Jeremiah 51:17

**17  “People are so stupid and know so little. Goldsmiths are made ashamed by their idols, because those statues are only false gods. They have no breath in them.**

, 47

**47  The time will surely come when I will punish the idols of Babylon, and the whole land will be disgraced. There will be many dead people lying all around.**

Exodus 20:4–6

**4 “You must not make for yourselves an idol that looks like anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the water below the land. 5 You must not worship or serve any idol, because I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God. If you hate me, I will punish your children, and even your grandchildren and great-grandchildren. 6 But I show kindness to thousands who love me and obey my commands.**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 17?

inVite

A Call to Commitment   
Revelation’s appeal is an urgent call to commitment, summarized in the symbolism of the two women in Revelation. Although at times it will appear that God’s people have been defeated in the cosmic controversy between truth and falsity, God promises that His church will triumph in the end. Christ is the solid foundation His church is built upon. His church is based on the teachings of His Word and is guided by His Spirit. On the contrary, Babylon, as we have seen, is rooted in human-made teachings and traditions. Any religious leader who substitutes human opinions or traditions in place of or above the revealed will of God in the Scriptures is simply fostering Babylonian ideology. In the days of ancient Babylon, church and state were one and the same. When King Nebuchadnezzar sat in his temple on his royal throne, he supposedly spoke for the gods. On one occasion, as an act of defiance against the true God, the Babylonian king passed a universal decree that commanded all his subjects to bow to his image, a powerful foreshadowing of what God’s faithful people, those who refuse to worship the false image, will face in the last days (see Dan. 3

**The Gold Idol and Blazing Furnace 3 King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue ninety feet high and nine feet wide and set it up on the plain of Dura in the area of Babylon. 2 Then he called for the leaders: the governors, assistant governors, captains of the soldiers, people who advised the king, keepers of the treasury, judges, rulers, and all other officers in his kingdom. He wanted them to come to the special service for the statue he had set up. 3 So they all came for the special service and stood in front of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 4 Then the man who made announcements for the king said in a loud voice, “People, nations, and those of every language, this is what you are commanded to do: 5 When you hear the sound of the horns, flutes, lyres, zithers, n harps, pipes, and all the other musical instruments, you must bow down and worship the gold statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. 6 Anyone who doesn’t bow down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace.” 7 Now people, nations, and those who spoke every language were there. When they heard the sound of the horns, flutes, lyres, zithers, pipes, and all the other musical instruments, they bowed down and worshiped the gold statue King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. 8 Then some Babylonians came up to the king and began speaking against the men of Judah. 9 They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O king, live forever! 10 O king, you gave a command that everyone who heard the horns, lyres, zithers, harps, pipes, and all the other musical instruments would have to bow down and worship the gold statue. 11 Anyone who wouldn’t do this was to be thrown into a blazing furnace. 12 O king, there are some men of Judah whom you made officers in the area of Babylon that did not pay attention to your order. Their names are Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They do not serve your gods and do not worship the gold statue you have set up.” 13 Nebuchadnezzar became very angry and called for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. When they were brought to the king, 14 Nebuchadnezzar said, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, is it true that you do not serve my gods nor worship the gold statue I have set up? 15 In a moment you will again hear the sound of the horns, flutes, lyres, zithers, harps, pipes, and all the other musical instruments. If you bow down and worship the statue I made, that will be good. But if you do not worship it, you will immediately be thrown into the blazing furnace. What god will be able to save you from my power then?” 16 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king, saying, “Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves to you. 17 If you throw us into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from the furnace. He will save us from your power, O king. 18 But even if God does not save us, we want you, O king, to know this: We will not serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.” 19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was furious with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and he changed his mind. He ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual. 20 Then he commanded some of the strongest soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the blazing furnace. 21 So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were tied up and thrown into the blazing furnace while still wearing their robes, trousers, turbans, and other clothes. 22 The king’s command was very strict, and the furnace was made so hot that the flames killed the strong soldiers who threw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the furnace. 23 Firmly tied, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell into the blazing furnace. 24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was so surprised that he jumped to his feet. He asked the men who advised him, “Didn’t we tie up only three men and throw them into the fire?” They answered, “Yes, O king.” 25 The king said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire. They are not tied up, and they are not burned. The fourth man looks like a son of the gods.” 26 Then Nebuchadnezzar went to the opening of the blazing furnace and shouted, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, come out! Servants of the Most High God, come here!” So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire. 27 When they came out, the governors, assistant governors, captains of the soldiers, and royal advisers crowded around them and saw that the fire had not harmed their bodies. Their hair was not burned, their robes were not burned, and they didn’t even smell like smoke! 28 Then Nebuchadnezzar said, “Praise the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Their God has sent his angel and saved his servants from the fire! These three men trusted their God and refused to obey my command. They were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god other than their own. 29 So I now give this command: Anyone from any nation or language who says anything against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will be torn apart and have his house turned into a pile of stones. No other god can save his people like this.” 30 Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the area of Babylon.**

). A church-state system, spiritual Babylon, will arise in the final days of earth’s history and will have a spiritual leader who claims to speak as God. His word will be declared as the very word of God, and his commands the commands of God. Throughout the centuries the Roman popes have declared that they stand in the place of God on earth, summarized in the encyclical letter of June 20, 1894, written by Pope Leo XIII: “We hold upon this earth the place of Almighty God.” The Ferraris Ecclesiastical Dictionary adds, “The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God and the vicar of God.” The apostle Paul says these words to expose this kind of power: “the man of sin . . .opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God” (2 Thess. 2:3

**3 Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away n from God happens and the Man of Evil, n who is on his way to hell, appears.**

, 4

**4 He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God’s Temple and sit there and say that he is God.**

). Though many may not realize it, this church-state system is in direct contradiction to the Word of God. Daniel 3—the story of the three Hebrews who had been ordered to “worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up” (verse 5) in ancient Babylon—stands as a symbol, a model, of what will happen when spiritual Babylon, in the last days, will enforce worship of a false “image,” as well (see Rev. 13:15

**15 The second beast was given power to give life to the idol of the first one so that the idol could speak. And the second beast was given power to command all who will not worship the image of the beast to be killed.**

; 14:9

**9 Then a third angel followed the first two angels, saying in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his idol and gets the beast’s mark on the forehead or on the hand,**

, 11

**11 And the smoke from their burning pain will rise forever and ever. There will be no rest, day or night, for those who worship the beast and his idol or who get the mark of his name.”**

; 16:2

**2 The first angel left and poured out his bowl on the land. Then ugly and painful sores came upon all those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his idol.**

; 19:20

**20 But the beast was captured and with him the false prophet who did the miracles for the beast. The false prophet had used these miracles to trick those who had the mark of the beast and worshiped his idol. The false prophet and the beast were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.**

; Rev. 20:4

**4 Then I saw some thrones and people sitting on them who had been given the power to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been killed because they were faithful to the message of Jesus and the message from God. They had not worshiped the beast or his idol, and they had not received the mark of the beast on their foreheads or on their hands. They came back to life and ruled with Christ for a thousand years.**

). How interesting that the commandment that the three Hebrews would have violated, the second commandment (Exod. 20:4

**4 “You must not make for yourselves an idol that looks like anything in the sky above or on the earth below or in the water below the land.**

, 5

**5 You must not worship or serve any idol, because I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God. If you hate me, I will punish your children, and even your grandchildren and great-grandchildren.**

), was one of the two commandments that this power, depicted in another place as seeking “to change times and laws” (Dan. 7:25

**25 This king will speak against the Most High God, and he will hurt and kill God’s holy people. He will try to change times and laws that have already been set. The holy people that belong to God will be in that king’s power for three and one-half years.**

), had tampered with. What was the other commandment it tampered with? Of course, the fourth commandment, which, as we have seen and will see again, sits at the heart of the whole question of worship and will be central in the final crisis when we face the question of whether we will worship the One who “made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day” (Exod. 20:11

**11 The reason is that in six days the Lord made everything—the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. On the seventh day he rested. So the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

; see also Rev. 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

), or the beast and his image. Journal: Meditate on Revelation 17 again and look for where Jesus is.What are some ways the church been a protective gift from Jesus to you against Babylon?How do you see Jesus differently in the light of this week’s lesson?

inSight

Punishing False Religion  
The woman (Babylon) of Revelation 17 is described as “arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness: . . . and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots.” Says the prophet: “I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” Babylon is further declared to be “that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” Revelation 17:4-6

**4 The woman was dressed in purple and red and was shining with the gold, precious jewels, and pearls she was wearing. She had a golden cup in her hand, a cup filled with evil things and the uncleanness of her sexual sin. 5 On her forehead a title was written that was secret. This is what was written: the great babylon mother of prostitutes and of the evil things of the earth 6 Then I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God’s holy people and with the blood of those who were killed because of their faith in Jesus. When I saw the woman, I was very amazed.**

, 18

**18 The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”**

. The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is Rome. The purple and scarlet color, the gold and precious stones and pearls, vividly picture the magnificence and more than kingly pomp affected by the haughty see of Rome. And no other power could be so truly declared “drunken with the blood of the saints” as that church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ. Babylon is also charged with the sin of unlawful connection with “the kings of the earth.” It was by departure from the Lord, and alliance with the heathen, that the Jewish church became a harlot; and Rome, corrupting herself in like manner by seeking the support of worldly powers, receives a like condemnation. Babylon is said to be “the mother of harlots.” By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. The message of Revelation 14, announcing the fall of Babylon must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days; therefore it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God’s people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith. At the time of their rise these churches took a noble stand for God and the truth, and His blessing was with them. Even the unbelieving world was constrained to acknowledge the beneficent results that followed an acceptance of the principles of the gospel. In the words of the prophet to Israel: “Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.” But they fell by the same desire which was the curse and ruin of Israel—the desire of imitating the practices and courting the friendship of the ungodly. “Thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown.” Ezekiel 16:14

**14 Then you became famous among the nations, because you were so beautiful. Your beauty was perfect, because of the glory I gave you, says the Lord God.**

, 15

**Jerusalem Becomes a Prostitute 15 “ ‘But you trusted in your beauty. You became a prostitute, because you were so famous. You had sexual relations with anyone who passed by.**

. Many of the Protestant churches are following Rome’s example of iniquitous connection with “the kings of the earth”—the state churches, by their relation to secular governments; and other denominations, by seeking the favor of the world. And the term “Babylon”—confusion—may be appropriately applied to these bodies, all professing to derive their doctrines from the Bible, yet divided into almost innumerable sects, with widely conflicting creeds and theories. Besides a sinful union with the world, the churches that separated from Rome present other of her characteristics. (Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911], 382, 383.) From age to age the Lord has made known the manner of His working. When a crisis has come, He has revealed Himself, and has interposed to hinder the working out of Satan’s plans. With nations, with families, and with individuals, He has often permitted matters to come to a crisis, that His interference might become marked. Then He has made manifest that there is a God in Israel who will maintain His law and vindicate His people. In this time of prevailing iniquity we may know that the last great crisis is at hand. When the defiance of God’s law is almost universal, when His people are oppressed and afflicted by their fellow men, the Lord will interpose. The time is near when He will say, “Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” Isaiah 26:20

**Judgment: Reward or Punishment 20  My people, go into your rooms and shut your doors behind you. Hide in your rooms for a short time until God’s anger is finished.**

, 21

**21  The Lord will leave his place to punish the people of the world for their sins. The earth will show the blood of the people who have been killed; it will not cover the dead any longer.**

. Men who claim to be Christians may now defraud and oppress the poor; they may rob the widow and fatherless; they may indulge their Satanic hatred because they cannot control the consciences of God’s people; but for all this God will bring them into judgment. They “shall have judgment without mercy” that have “showed no mercy.” James 2:13

**13 So you must show mercy to others, or God will not show mercy to you when he judges you. But the person who shows mercy can stand without fear at the judgment.**

. Not long hence they will stand before the Judge of all the earth, to render an account for the pain they have caused to the bodies and souls of His heritage. They may now indulge in false accusations, they may deride those whom God has appointed to do His work, they may consign His believing ones to prison, to the chain gang, to banishment, to death; but for every pang of anguish, every tear shed, they must answer. God will reward them double for their sins. Concerning Babylon, the symbol of the apostate church, He says to His ministers of judgment, “Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.” Revelation 18:5

**5  Her sins have piled up as high as the sky, and God has not forgotten the wrongs she has done.**

, 6

**6  Give that city the same as she gave to others. Pay her back twice as much as she did. Prepare wine for her that is twice as strong as the wine she prepared for others.**

. (Ellen G. White, Christ’s Object Lessons [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1900, 1941], 178, 179.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, what decisions need to be made in your personal spiritual life?What are some decisions that may impact your social life?Review the memory verse.How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

Why must we take care in how we talk about Babylon?Why must we be careful not to judge people as individuals, as opposed to the Babylonian system itself?What relationship does the Tower of Babel have with modern spiritual Babylon? What are some similarities between the two?How do you harmonize the two contrasting ideas that Jesus has given authority to His church, but it is dangerous to place our religious experience in the hands of any spiritual leader?What are the limits of church authority?How do we know that idolatry, one of the sins of Babylon, isn’t just bowing down to statues?In what ways have you fallen into idolatry?What are some other parallels you can find between Daniel 3 and the forced worship that will take place when spiritual Babylon comes into power once again?What warnings about the last days have gone silent in your own ears? Why?

SATAN’S FINAL DECEPTIONS

inTro

Poison Control  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 16:13, 14 and  
18:2, 3

**And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs:for they are spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.**

Poison Control It was one of those gorgeous September mornings in Chicago. As the sun rose over Lake Michigan and commuters battled traffic jams on the Kennedy and Eisenhower expressways and children made their way to school, a chilling story began to emerge that struck fear into the hearts of all Chicagoans: people were becoming tragically sick, and some were dying just a few hours after taking Tylenol capsules. Upon testing, each of the capsules proved to be laced with potassium cyanide, a deadly poison. A deranged individual had tampered with the medication. To this day, authorities don’t know who did this.As we have seen, Revelation warns us that the “inhabitants of the earth” will drink a deadly poison called the “wine” of Babylon. There are false doctrines and teachings that, in the end, will lead only to death. However, the world is not left without the antidote, the protection against this spiritual poison: the three angels’ messages.In this week’s lesson we will continue to look at Babylon’s deceptions, Jesus’ plan to save us from them, and the death they would otherwise bring.

inGest

Scripture Before Immortality of the Soul  
Jesus uttered a powerful warning concerning the last days: “For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect” (Mark 13:22

**22 False Christs and false prophets will come and perform great wonders and miracles. They will try to fool even the people God has chosen, if that is possible.**

). Who are the “elect”? Regarding that group, He later says, “And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Matt. 24:31

**31 He will use a loud trumpet to send his angels all around the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from every part of the world.**

). God is obviously going to have some faithful people in the last days, as He has had all through the ages. However, the wording here shows just how widespread Satan’s deceptions really are. A little scary, isn’t it, when the deceptions in the last days will be so great that even the faithful ones will be in danger of being deceived? People are often told to follow their conscience to determine for themselves what is right or wrong, good or evil, and then live accordingly. But the Scripture says that we are all sinners, all corrupted (Jer. 17:9

**9  “More than anything else, a person’s mind is evil and cannot be healed. Who can understand it?**

; Rom. 3:9–18

**All People Are Guilty 9 So are we Jews better than others? No! We have already said that Jews and those who are not Jews are all guilty of sin. 10 As the Scriptures say: “There is no one who always does what is right, not even one. 11  There is no one who understands. There is no one who looks to God for help. 12  All have turned away. Together, everyone has become useless. There is no one who does anything good; there is not even one.” Psalm 14:1–3 13  “Their throats are like open graves; they use their tongues for telling lies.” Psalm 5:9 “Their words are like snake poison.” Psalm 140:3 14  “Their mouths are full of cursing and hate.” Psalm 10:7 15  “They are always ready to kill people. 16  Everywhere they go they cause ruin and misery. 17  They don’t know how to live in peace.” Isaiah 59:7–8 18  “They have no fear of God.” Psalm 36:1**

), and so to trust our own sentiments is almost a guaranteed way to, sooner or later, get it wrong and even to do wrong. A lot of evil has been perpetrated through the ages by people utterly convinced of the rightness of their cause. In other words, they followed the “way that seems right” to them (Prov. 14:12

**12  Some people think they are doing right, but in the end it leads to death.**

). Instead of trusting our own judgment, we must immerse ourselves in the Word of God, and from His Word, as we surrender to the Holy Spirit, learn truth from error, right from wrong, good from evil. Left to our own devices or even to our own senses, we can become easy prey to Satan’s deceptions. In Revelation 16:13

**13 Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.**

, 14

**14 These evil spirits are the spirits of demons, which have power to do miracles. They go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them together for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.**

and Revelation 18:2

**2 He shouted in a powerful voice: “Ruined, ruined is the great city of Babylon! She has become a home for demons and a prison for every evil spirit, and a prison for every unclean bird and unclean beast.**

, 23

**23  The light of a lamp will never shine in you again, and the voices of a bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world’s great people, and all the nations were tricked by your magic.**

, such expressions as the “dwelling place of demons,” the “spirits of demons,” and “sorcery” are used to indicate that demonic activity is one of the tools Satan will employ to deceive the people of the world. We have also been warned that of the two great deceptions in the last days, one will be “the immortality of the soul” (see Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Association., 1911], p. 588). Of course, that’s easy to identify today. Even in the Christian world, the idea of the soul being immortal is all but staple Christian doctrine. Many Christians believe that at death the saved go soaring off to heaven and the lost descend into hell. How often, for instance, after the evangelist Billy Graham died, did we hear that “Billy Graham is safe now in heaven, in the loving arms of Jesus” or the like? This kind of thing is taught all the time from pulpits, in classrooms, and especially at funerals. One of the pillars of the Babylonian deceptions is a false understanding of death, which, centered on the idea of the immortality of the soul, prepares the way for the harmful influence of spiritualism. If you believe the dead live on in some form and might even be able to communicate with us, what protection do you have from any of the other countless deceptions Satan has? If you thought your dead mother or child had suddenly appeared and talked to you, how easy would it be to be fooled by your senses? This has happened in the past, it happens now, and it will certainly, as we near the very final days, continue to happen. Our only protection is to stand firmly rooted in what the Bible teaches and to cling to the biblical teaching that death is a sleep until the second coming of Jesus. Journal: What examples of modern spiritualism exist in your culture today? How is firm adherence to the Word of God our only protection? Though this may seem obvious, why?

inTerpret

Scripture Before Sun Worship  
Sun worship was a prominent practice in Egypt, Assyria, and Persia. The practice was popular in Babylon as well, as James G. Frazer observes in his book The Worship of Nature: “In ancient Babylonia the sun was worshipped from immemorial antiquity” ([London: Macmillan and Co., 1926], vol. 1, 529). It may seem surprising, but at times Babylonian sun worship influenced the worship of God’s people in the Old Testament. For example, the prophet Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel’s, depicted some of God’s people standing with their backs toward the temple of God worshiping the sun in the east (Ezek. 8:16

**16 Then he brought me into the inner courtyard of the Temple. There I saw about twenty-five men at the entrance to the Temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar. With their backs turned to the Temple of the Lord, they faced east and were worshiping the sun in the east.**

; 2 Ki. 23:5

**5 The kings of Judah had chosen priests for these gods. These priests burned incense in the places where gods were worshiped in the cities of Judah and the towns around Jerusalem. They burned incense to Baal, the sun, the moon, the planets, and all the stars of the sky. But Josiah took those priests away.**

, 11

**11 Judah’s kings had placed horses at the front door of the Temple of the Lord in the courtyard near the room of Nathan-Melech, an officer. These horses were for the worship of the sun. So Josiah removed them and burned the chariots that were for sun worship also.**

). Instead of worshiping the Creator of the sun, they worshiped the sun itself. In Revelation 17 John describes a time when the principles of Babylon, including sun worship, would enter the Christian church in an age of compromise. This was realized during the reign of Constantine in the early part of the fourth century, whose casual conversion caused great joy in the Roman Empire. Constantine had a strong affinity for sun worship, documented by Edward Gibbon, the renowned historian: “The Sun was universally celebrated as the invincible guide and protector of Constantine” (The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire [London: J. O. Robinson & Co, Ltd., 1830], 12). In a.d. 321 Constantine also passed the first “Sunday law.” This edict stated, “On the venerable day of the Sun let the Magistrates and the people residing in the cities rest, and let all workshops be closed” (Edict of Constantine). This was not a law enforcing Sunday observance for all of Constantine’s subjects, but it did strengthen the observance of Sunday in the minds of the Roman population. It was in succeeding decades that emperors and popes continued through state decrees and church councils to establish Sunday as the singular day of worship, which it remains for the majority of Christians today. What a powerful example of the hard truth that just because most people believe in something or practice it, it is not necessarily right. Here is a remarkable statement by Edward T. Hiscox, the author of the Standard Manual for Baptist Churches. In 1893 he addressed a group of hundreds of Baptist ministers and shocked them as he explained how Sunday came into the Christian church: “What a pity that it [Sunday] comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun god, then adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism!” (Edward Hiscox, before a New York ministers’ conference, Nov. 13, 1893). The message of the second angel in Revelation 14 is “Babylon is fallen, is fallen” (verse 8). In Revelation 17 the woman identified as spiritual Babylon, dressed in purple and scarlet, rides upon a scarlet-colored beast, passes around her wine cup, and gets the world drunk with error. Church and state unite. Falsehood prevails. Demons work their miracles to deceive. The world catapults into its final conflict. At the same time, the people of God are maligned, ridiculed, oppressed, and persecuted, but in Christ and through the power of His Holy Spirit they are steadfast in their commitment. All the powers of hell and forces of evil cannot break their loyalty to Christ. They are secure in Him. He is their “refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Ps. 46:1

**God is our protection and our strength. He always helps in times of trouble.**

). Ezekiel 20:1–20

**Israel Has Refused God 20 It was the seventh year of our captivity, in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month. Some of the elders of Israel came to ask about the Lord and sat down in front of me. 2 The Lord spoke his word to me, saying: 3 “Human, speak to the elders of Israel and say to them: ‘This is what the Lord God says: Did you come to ask me questions? As surely as I live, I will not let you ask me questions.’ 4 “Will you judge them? Will you judge them, human? Let them know the hateful things their ancestors did. 5 Say to them: ‘This is what the Lord God says: When I chose Israel, I made a promise to the descendants of Jacob. I made myself known to them in Egypt, and I promised them, “I am the Lord your God.” 6 At that time I promised them I would bring them out of Egypt into a land I had found for them, a fertile land, the best land in the world. 7 I said to them, “Each one of you must throw away the hateful idols you have seen and liked. Don’t make yourselves unclean with the idols of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.” 8 “ ‘But they turned against me and refused to listen to me. They did not throw away the hateful idols which they saw and liked; they did not give up the idols of Egypt. Then I decided to pour out my anger against them while they were still in Egypt. 9 But I acted for the sake of my name so it would not be dishonored in full view of the nations where the Israelites lived. I made myself known to the Israelites with a promise to bring them out of Egypt while the nations were watching. 10 So I took them out of Egypt and brought them into the desert. 11 I gave them my rules and told them about my laws, by which people will live if they obey them. 12 I also gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between us so they would know that I am the Lord who made them holy. 13 “ ‘But in the desert Israel turned against me. They did not follow my rules, and they rejected my laws, by which people will live if they obey them. They dishonored my Sabbaths. Then I decided to pour out my anger against them and destroy them in the desert. 14 But I acted for the sake of my name so it would not be dishonored in full view of the nations who watched as I had brought the Israelites out of Egypt. 15 And in the desert I swore to the Israelites that I would not bring them into the land I had given them. It is a fertile land, the best land in the world. 16 This was because they rejected my laws and did not follow my rules. They dishonored my Sabbaths and wanted to worship their idols. 17 But I had pity on them. I did not destroy them or put an end to them in the desert. 18 I said to their children in the desert, “Don’t live by the rules of your parents, or obey their laws. Don’t make yourselves unclean with their idols. 19 I am the Lord your God. Live by my rules, obey my laws, and follow them. 20 Keep my Sabbaths holy, and they will be a sign between me and you. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.”**

is an earnest appeal for Israel to forsake pagan practices and to worship the Creator instead of their false gods, in this passage called the “idols of Egypt.” In the message of the three angels, God is making a similar appeal to “worship the Creator,” for “Babylon is fallen.” God is calling an end-time people back to faithfulness to His Word. The Sabbath and our faithfulness to it will play a crucial role in the final events. Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth” (John 17:17

**17 Make them ready for your service through your truth; your teaching is truth.**

). The truth of God’s Word, not human opinion or tradition, is the spiritual North Star that will guide us in this critical hour of earth’s history. Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?What lessons can we take away for ourselves from what has been written in Ezekiel 20:1–20

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? (See also 1 Cor. 10:11

**11 The things that happened to those people are examples. They were written down to teach us, because we live in a time when all these things of the past have reached their goal.**

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inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Satan’s final deceptions? Revelation 17:1–6

**The Woman on the Animal 17 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke to me. He said, “Come, and I will show you the punishment that will be given to the great prostitute, the one sitting over many waters. 2 The kings of the earth sinned sexually with her, and the people of the earth became drunk from the wine of her sexual sin.” 3 Then the angel carried me away by the Spirit to the desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a red beast. It was covered with names against God written on it, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was dressed in purple and red and was shining with the gold, precious jewels, and pearls she was wearing. She had a golden cup in her hand, a cup filled with evil things and the uncleanness of her sexual sin. 5 On her forehead a title was written that was secret. This is what was written: the great babylon mother of prostitutes and of the evil things of the earth 6 Then I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God’s holy people and with the blood of those who were killed because of their faith in Jesus. When I saw the woman, I was very amazed.**

, 14–18

**14 They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. He will defeat them with his called, chosen, and faithful followers.” 15 Then the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, races, nations, and languages. 16 The ten horns and the beast you saw will hate the prostitute. They will take everything she has and leave her naked. They will eat her body and burn her with fire. 17 God made the ten horns want to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until what God has said comes about. 18 The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”**

Revelation 18:4

**4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying: “Come out of that city, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive the disasters that will come to her.**

Jeremiah 50:33–38

**33 This is what the Lord All-Powerful says: “The people of Israel and Judah are slaves. The enemy took them as prisoners and won’t let them go. 34  But God is strong and will buy them back. His name is the Lord All-Powerful. He will surely defend them with power so he can give rest to their land. But he will not give rest to those living in Babylon.” 35 The Lord says, “Let a sword kill the people living in Babylon and her officers and wise men! 36  Let a sword kill her false prophets, and they will become fools. Let a sword kill her warriors, and they will be full of terror. 37  Let a sword kill her horses and chariots and all the soldiers hired from other countries! Then they will be like frightened women. Let a sword attack her treasures, so they will be taken away. 38  Let a sword attack her waters so they will be dried up. She is a land of idols, and the people go crazy with fear over them.**

Psalm 115:4–8

**4  Their idols are made of silver and gold, the work of human hands. 5  They have mouths, but they cannot speak. They have eyes, but they cannot see. 6  They have ears, but they cannot hear. They have noses, but they cannot smell. 7  They have hands, but they cannot feel. They have feet, but they cannot walk. No sounds come from their throats. 8  People who make idols will be like them, and so will those who trust them.**

Revelation 12:9

**9 The giant dragon was thrown down out of heaven. (He is that old snake called the devil or Satan, who tricks the whole world.) The dragon with his angels was thrown down to the earth.**

Proverbs 14:12

**12  Some people think they are doing right, but in the end it leads to death.**

Job 19:25–27

**25  I know that my Defender lives, and in the end he will stand upon the earth. 26  Even after my skin has been destroyed, in my flesh I will see God. 27  I will see him myself; I will see him with my very own eyes. How my heart wants that to happen!**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 16:13

**13 Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.**

, 14

**14 These evil spirits are the spirits of demons, which have power to do miracles. They go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them together for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.**

and 18:2

**2 He shouted in a powerful voice: “Ruined, ruined is the great city of Babylon! She has become a home for demons and a prison for every evil spirit, and a prison for every unclean bird and unclean beast.**

, 3

**3  She has been ruined, because all the peoples of the earth have drunk the wine of the desire of her sexual sin. She has been ruined also because the kings of the earth have sinned sexually with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the great wealth of her luxury.”**

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inVite

Grace for Obedience  
The woman dressed in scarlet and purple, riding on the scarlet-covered beast, has passed around her wine cup, and the world is drunk with Babylon’s false doctrines (Rev. 17

**The Woman on the Animal 17 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke to me. He said, “Come, and I will show you the punishment that will be given to the great prostitute, the one sitting over many waters. 2 The kings of the earth sinned sexually with her, and the people of the earth became drunk from the wine of her sexual sin.” 3 Then the angel carried me away by the Spirit to the desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a red beast. It was covered with names against God written on it, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was dressed in purple and red and was shining with the gold, precious jewels, and pearls she was wearing. She had a golden cup in her hand, a cup filled with evil things and the uncleanness of her sexual sin. 5 On her forehead a title was written that was secret. This is what was written: the great babylon mother of prostitutes and of the evil things of the earth 6 Then I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God’s holy people and with the blood of those who were killed because of their faith in Jesus. When I saw the woman, I was very amazed. 7 Then the angel said to me, “Why are you amazed? I will tell you the secret of this woman and the beast she rides—the one with seven heads and ten horns. 8 The beast you saw was once alive but is not alive now. But soon it will come up out of the bottomless pit and go away to be destroyed. There are people who live on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life since the beginning of the world. They will be amazed when they see the beast, because he was once alive, is not alive now, but will come again. 9 “You need a wise mind to understand this. The seven heads on the beast are seven mountains where the woman sits. 10 And they are seven kings. Five of the kings have already been destroyed, one of the kings lives now, and another has not yet come. When he comes, he must stay a short time. 11 The beast that was once alive, but is not alive now, is also an eighth king. He belongs to the first seven kings, and he will go away to be destroyed. 12 “The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet begun to rule, but they will receive power to rule with the beast for one hour. 13 All ten of these kings have the same purpose, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. 14 They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. He will defeat them with his called, chosen, and faithful followers.” 15 Then the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, races, nations, and languages. 16 The ten horns and the beast you saw will hate the prostitute. They will take everything she has and leave her naked. They will eat her body and burn her with fire. 17 God made the ten horns want to carry out his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until what God has said comes about. 18 The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”**

). Speaking of the “wine of Babylon,” Ellen G. White makes this clear comment: “What is that wine? Her false doctrines. She has given to the world a false Sabbath instead of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and has repeated the falsehood that Satan first told to Eve in Eden—the natural immortality of the soul” (in Review and Herald, Dec. 6, 1892). These erroneous teachings have deceived millions. As a result, God is giving His people, still entrenched in error, a final last-day appeal to return to Him. As we already have seen (but what is worth repeating), many of God’s people are in religious organizations that have compromised biblical teachings. They do not understand the truths of Scripture. God’s loving appeal is straightforward: “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues” (Rev. 18:4

**4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying: “Come out of that city, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive the disasters that will come to her.**

). Sin is the transgression or the breaking of God’s law. The only way anyone can obey the law is through faith in the power of the living Christ. We are weak, frail, faltering, sinful human beings, but by faith when we accept Christ, His grace atones for our past and empowers our present. He gives us “grace and apostleship, for obedience” (Rom. 1:5

**5 Through Christ, God gave me the special work of an apostle, which was to lead people of all nations to believe and obey. I do this work for him.**

). Heaven’s appeal to the people in churches that do not respect and obey the law of God is to step out by faith. His appeal to Adventists in Sabbathkeeping congregations is to forsake all self-centered, human attempts at obedience and live godly lives by faith in the grace of Christ, which delivers us from sin’s condemnation and domination. And just as Israel’s faithfulness to the law (Deut. 4:6

**6 Obey these laws carefully, in order to show the other nations that you have wisdom and understanding. When they hear about these laws, they will say, “This great nation of Israel is wise and understanding.”**

) would have been a powerful witness to the world, our faithfulness, too, can be a powerful witness and can help guide people out of Babylon. “Babylon the great” in the book of Revelation designates, in a special sense, the united apostate religions at the close of time. . . . “Babylon the great” is the name by which Inspiration refers to the great threefold religious union of the papacy, apostate Protestantism, and spiritism. . . . The term “Babylon” refers to the organizations themselves and to their leaders, not so much to the members as such. The latter are referred to as “many waters” (Rev. 17:1

**The Woman on the Animal 17 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke to me. He said, “Come, and I will show you the punishment that will be given to the great prostitute, the one sitting over many waters.**

, 15

**15 Then the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, races, nations, and languages.**

)” (The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, pp. 851, 852). Journal: Meditate on this week’s passage again and look for where Jesus is.How does 1 John 3:4

**4 The person who sins breaks God’s law. Yes, sin is living against God’s law.**

harmonize with Romans 14:23

**23 But those who eat something without being sure it is right are wrong because they did not believe it was right. Anything that is done without believing it is right is a sin.**

, especially in their definitions of sin?To you personally, how is Jesus the answer to your faithlessness?

inSight

Two Great Errors  
The iniquity and spiritual darkness that prevailed under the supremacy of Rome were the inevitable result of her suppression of the Scriptures; but where is to be found the cause of the widespread infidelity, the rejection of the law of God, and the consequent corruption, under the full blaze of gospel light in an age of religious freedom? Now that Satan can no longer keep the world under his control by withholding the Scriptures, he resorts to other means to accomplish the same object. To destroy faith in the Bible serves his purpose as well as to destroy the Bible itself. By introducing the belief that God’s law is not binding, he as effectually leads men to transgress as if they were wholly ignorant of its precepts. And now, as in former ages, he has worked through the church to further his designs. The religious organizations of the day have refused to listen to unpopular truths plainly brought to view in the Scriptures, and in combating them they have adopted interpretations and taken positions which have sown broadcast the seeds of skepticism. Clinging to the papal error of natural immortality and man’s consciousness in death, they have rejected the only defense against the delusions of spiritualism. The doctrine of eternal torment has led many to disbelieve the Bible. And as the claims of the fourth commandment are urged upon the people, it is found that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is enjoined; and as the only way to free themselves from a duty which they are unwilling to perform, many popular teachers declare that the law of God is no longer binding. Thus they cast away the law and the Sabbath together. As the work of Sabbath reform extends, this rejection of the divine law to avoid the claims of the fourth commandment will become well-nigh universal. The teachings of religious leaders have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God’s holy law; and upon these leaders rests a fearful responsibility for the iniquity that exists in the Christian world. Yet this very class put forth the claim that the fast-spreading corruption is largely attributable to the desecration of the so-called “Christian sabbath,” and that the enforcement of Sunday observance would greatly improve the morals of society. This claim is especially urged in America, where the doctrine of the true Sabbath has been most widely preached. Here the temperance work, one of the most prominent and important of moral reforms, is often combined with the Sunday movement, and the advocates of the latter represent themselves as laboring to promote the highest interest of society; and those who refuse to unite with them are denounced as the enemies of temperance and reform. But the fact that a movement to establish error is connected with a work which is in itself good is not an argument in favor of the error. We may disguise poison by mingling it with wholesome food, but we do not change its nature. On the contrary, it is rendered more dangerous, as it is more likely to be taken unawares. It is one of Satan’s devices to combine with falsehood just enough truth to give it plausibility. The leaders of the Sunday movement may advocate reforms which the people need, principles which are in harmony with the Bible; yet while there is with these a requirement which is contrary to God’s law, His servants cannot unite with them. Nothing can justify them in setting aside the commandments of God for the precepts of men. Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience. As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power. The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of spiritualism. Papists, who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this wonder-working power; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded. Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium. Through spiritualism, Satan appears as a benefactor of the race, healing the diseases of the people, and professing to present a new and more exalted system of religious faith; but at the same time he works as a destroyer. His temptations are leading multitudes to ruin. Intemperance dethrones reason; sensual indulgence, strife, and bloodshed follow. Satan delights in war, for it excites the worst passions of the soul and then sweeps into eternity its victims steeped in vice and blood. It is his object to incite the nations to war against one another, for he can thus divert the minds of the people from the work of preparation to stand in the day of God. (Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy, 586–589.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, what are your personal takeaways?What are the takeaways for the organizations and communities that you are a part of?Review the memory verse.How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

Why is it so critically important to understand the truth about death? What does it protect us from? Why is it so comforting, too?How can we avoid being deceived by the obvious as well as the subtle deceptions of the devil?How do we explain that some who do evil believe they are following the will of God? What role should the law of God play in this explanation?Think through examples of people who have done evil things even though they were acting based on what they believed was right or even what they believed was God’s will. What can we learn from these tragic events? Look around at how prevalent Sunday worship is in Christian churches. What should this fact teach us about how pervasive Satan’s deceptions are? Again, as with the state of the dead, what is our only safeguard?What is God’s appeal to the multitudes still in fallen religious organizations?How are Satan’s final deceptions different from any of his other ones?How are they exactly the same?How do we avoid fanaticism as well as naïveté? Which ditch are you more prone to fall into?

THE SEAL OF GOD AND THE MARK OF THE BEAST: PART 1

inTro

The Greatest Force  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 13

**and he stood upon the sand of the sea.  
And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy.And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority.And one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast;and they worshipped the dragon, because he gave his authority unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? and who is able to war with him?and there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months.And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, them that dwell in the heaven.And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation.And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain.If any man hath an ear, let him hear.If any man for captivity, into captivity he goeth: if any man shall kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.And he exerciseth all the authority of the first beast in his sight. And he maketh the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose death-stroke was healed.And he doeth great signs, that he should even make fire to come down out of heaven upon the earth in the sight of men.And he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which it was given him to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast who hath the stroke of the sword and lived.And it was given unto to give breath to it, to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed.And he causeth all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead;and that no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, the name of the beast or the number of his name.Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding, let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man: and his number is Six hundred and sixty and six.**

The Greatest ForceAs we study end-time events related to the mark of the beast, one crucial point that comes through is the difference between how God operates and how the enemy does.As we have been studying, the central issues in the great controversy between Christ and Satan focus on authority, loyalty, and worship. The prophecies describing the beast in Revelation 13, the little horn in Daniel 7, and the “son of perdition” in 2 Thessalonians 2 all speak of a power that usurps God’s authority, commands loyalty, and introduces a counterfeit system of worship. They do so using force, coercion, and at times bribes and rewards—all to control worship.In contrast, love is the great motivating force of the kingdom of God. Rather than worshiping the beast, God’s people find their greatest joy and highest delight in worshiping Him. They are committed to Him because they know how committed He is to them. There is only one thing that will keep any of us from receiving the mark of the beast in the end-time: a love for Jesus so deep that nothing can break our hold upon Him.In this lesson we will explore these themes further.

inGest

Enduring Faith of Jesus  
As we have seen in Revelation 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

, God calls all people to worship the Creator. This is the first angel’s message. In Revelation 14:8

**8 Then the second angel followed the first angel and said, “Ruined, ruined is the great city of Babylon! She made all the nations drink the wine of the anger of her adultery.”**

God warns people about “Babylon,” a false religious system with roots in the ancient city of Babylon. This is the second angel’s message. In Revelation 14:9

**9 Then a third angel followed the first two angels, saying in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his idol and gets the beast’s mark on the forehead or on the hand,**

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**10 that one also will drink the wine of God’s anger, which is prepared with all its strength in the cup of his anger. And that person will be put in pain with burning sulfur before the holy angels and the Lamb.**

, the third angel warns against worshiping the beast. The angel declares in a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God.” In Revelation 14:12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

the Greek word for “patience” is hupomone, which is better translated “steadfast endurance.” God will have an end-time people who are loyal to Him in the face of opposition and fierce persecution. Through His grace they stand with steadfast endurance, living God-centered, grace-filled, obedient lives. Worshiping the Creator (Rev. 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

) stands in direct opposition to worshiping the beast (verse 9) and finds its expression in a people who keep the commandments of God and live by the faith of Jesus (verse 12). This final conflict over allegiance to Christ or to the beast revolves around worship, and at the heart of this concluding act of the great controversy between good and evil will be the Sabbath. Living by faith, we receive His grace and our lives are changed. The committed followers of the Savior will not only have faith “in” Jesus, they will also have the faith “of” Jesus. Jesus’ quality of end-time faith will be theirs, and they will remain faithful, even unto death, as Jesus did. Hanging on the cross, enshrouded in darkness, bearing the guilt, shame, and condemnation of the sins of the world, and shut off from the sense of His Father’s love, Jesus depended on the relationship He had cultivated with the Father throughout His life. In other words, through a life of complete dependence upon the Father, even in good times, Jesus had prepared for the worst times. The Savior trusted, even when all around Him the circumstances cried out for Him to doubt. Even when it seemed that God had forsaken Him, Jesus didn’t give up. Ellen G. White sums it up as follows: “Amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father’s acceptance heretofore given Him. . . . By faith, Christ was victor” (Christ Triumphant [Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1999], p. 277). The faith of Jesus is a faith so deep, so trusting, so committed, that all the trials on earth and all the demons in the cosmos cannot shake it. It is a faith that trusts when it cannot see, believes when it cannot understand, hangs on when there is little to hang on to. This “faith of Jesus” is itself a gift we receive by faith that will carry us through the crisis ahead. It is “the faith of Jesus” dwelling in our hearts that enables us to worship Christ as supreme and to endure steadfastly when Revelation’s mark of the beast comes to fruition. However, this faith is not something that suddenly appears. God’s people have been learning to live by faith day by day in the here and now, before things have gotten difficult. In good times, in bad times, when God feels close, when He seems far away—it doesn’t matter, for “the just shall live by faith” (Gal. 3:11

**11 Now it is clear that no one can be made right with God by the law, because the Scriptures say, “Those who are right with God will live by faith.” n**

; see also Hab. 2:4

**4  The evil nation is very proud of itself; it is not living as it should. But those who are right with God will live by faith.**

). The time for preparation is now. Every trial now, if endured in faith, can bear precious fruit in our lives that will strengthen us in the difficult times ahead. Journal: How faithful are you in the little things? What might that tell you about how you will be when the real trial comes?Think about a time when life seemed to crumble around you and all that you had was your faith. How did you get by? What lessons did you learn? What did you experience that could help others who might be going through something similar?

inTerpret

Following the Lamb  
The prophecy regarding the mark of the beast is about religious intolerance, an economic boycott, persecution, and eventually a death decree. Surprisingly, it is also a message of encouragement. Even in the worst of times God will sustain His people, who “keep the commandments of God and [have] the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12, NKJV

**12 bHere is the 7patience of the saints; chere 8are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.**

). Among those commandments, of course, is the fourth: that of the seventh-day Sabbath. The mark of the beast prophecy in Revelation 13 tells us about the worst of Satan’s war against God. His first strategy in this campaign is deception. The above passage tells of a time in the future when the devil will work through an earthly religiopolitical power called the beast and will resort to using force to attempt to combat and silence God’s people. Religious persecution, of course, is not new. It has been around ever since Cain killed Abel for worshiping the way God instructed them to worship (see Gen. 4:1–8

**The First Family 4 Adam had sexual relations with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. n Eve said, “With the Lord’s help, I have given birth to a man.” 2 After that, Eve gave birth to Cain’s brother Abel. Abel took care of flocks, and Cain became a farmer. 3 Later, Cain brought some food from the ground as a gift to God. 4 Abel brought the best parts from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his gift, 5 but he did not accept Cain and his gift. So Cain became very angry and felt rejected. 6 The Lord asked Cain, “Why are you angry? Why do you look so unhappy? 7 If you do things well, I will accept you, but if you do not do them well, sin is ready to attack you. Sin wants you, but you must rule over it.” 8 Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out into the field.” While they were out in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.**

). Jesus said persecution would happen even to believers in the first century and would continue down through the ages: “The time is coming,” He warned, “that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service” (John 16:2

**2 People will put you out of their synagogues. Yes, the time is coming when those who kill you will think they are offering service to God.**

; see also Matt. 10:22

**22 All people will hate you because you follow me, but those people who keep their faith until the end will be saved.**

; 1 Pet. 4:12

**Suffering as a Christian 12 My friends, do not be surprised at the terrible trouble which now comes to test you. Do not think that something strange is happening to you.**

). The prophecy concerning the mark of the beast is about the final link in this ungodly chain of persecution. Like the persecutions of the past, it is designed to force everyone to conform to a certain set of beliefs and system of worship. The prophecy says the persecution will involve economic sanctions: No one can “buy or sell” unless they have “the mark.” When this happens, the vast majority of the world’s inhabitants will capitulate. Anyone who refuses will eventually face a death decree. The devil is preparing professed Christians by compromises in their lives to receive the mark of the beast when the final test comes upon us in the future. God’s love for each one of us will strengthen and preserve us during the troubling times ahead. The first beast of Revelation 13 receives his power, seat, and great authority from the dragon. Revelation 12:9

**9 The giant dragon was thrown down out of heaven. (He is that old snake called the devil or Satan, who tricks the whole world.) The dragon with his angels was thrown down to the earth.**

and Revelation 20:2

**2 The angel grabbed the dragon, that old snake who is the devil and Satan, and tied him up for a thousand years.**

identify the dragon as Satan, a cunning foe who works through earthly powers. Revelation 12:3–5

**3 Then another wonder appeared in heaven: There was a giant red dragon with seven heads and seven crowns on each head. He also had ten horns. 4 His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and threw them down to the earth. He stood in front of the woman who was ready to give birth so he could eat her baby as soon as it was born. 5 Then the woman gave birth to a son who will rule all the nations with an iron rod. And her child was taken up to God and to his throne.**

says this “dragon”—the devil—attempted to destroy the “male Child” as soon as He was born. This “male Child” was later “caught up to God and His throne” (verse 5). This, of course, refers to Christ. Desiring to destroy the Christ child, Satan worked through Herod and imperial Rome. At the end of Jesus’ life, a Roman governor, Pilate, condemned Christ to die, a Roman executioner nailed Him to a cruel cross, a Roman soldier pierced Him with a spear, and Roman soldiers guarded His tomb. According to Revelation 13:2

**2 This beast looked like a leopard, with feet like a bear’s feet and a mouth like a lion’s mouth. And the dragon gave the beast all of his power and his throne and great authority.**

, the dragon, Satan, working through pagan Rome, would give the seat of its government to this emerging beast power. The SDA Bible Commentary has this to say regarding the identity of both the dragon and the first beast: “Though primarily representing Satan, the dragon, in a secondary sense, represents the Roman Empire. . . . The power succeeding the Roman Empire, which received from the dragon ‘his power, and his seat, and great authority,’ [KJV], is clearly papal Rome” (vol. 7, p. 817), and historian A. C. Flick explains that “out of the ruins of political Rome arose the great moral Empire in the ‘giant form’ of the Roman Church” (The Rise of the Medieval Church [1900], p. 150, as quoted in The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, p. 817). In contrast to “all the world,” who follows the beast, God will have a people who will “follow the Lamb” instead. As always, it will be one side or the other, for Jesus or against Jesus. There will be then, as now, no middle ground, no neutral position. To not firmly commit to Jesus is, consciously or not, to commit to the other side. How ready are you to endure to the end? Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?How do you personally live a life that embodies a faith that “endures to the end”?

inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Satan’s final deceptions? Revelation 14:4

**4 These are the ones who did not do sinful things with women, because they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb every place he goes. These one hundred forty-four thousand were bought from among the people of the earth as people to be offered to God and the Lamb.**

, 12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

Luke 16:10

**10 Whoever can be trusted with a little can also be trusted with a lot, and whoever is dishonest with a little is dishonest with a lot.**

Matthew 10:22

**22 All people will hate you because you follow me, but those people who keep their faith until the end will be saved.**

Ephesians 2:8–10

**8 I mean that you have been saved by grace through believing. You did not save yourselves; it was a gift from God. 9 It was not the result of your own efforts, so you cannot brag about it. 10 God has made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which God planned in advance for us to live our lives doing.**

Romans 8:1–4

**Be Ruled by the Spirit 8 So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty. n 2 Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit that brings life made you n free from the law that brings sin and death. 3 The law was without power, because the law was made weak by our sinful selves. But God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son to earth with the same human life that others use for sin. By sending his Son to be an offering for sin, God used a human life to destroy sin. 4 He did this so that we could be the kind of people the law correctly wants us to be. Now we do not live following our sinful selves, but we live following the Spirit.**

Colossians 1:29

**29 To do this, I work and struggle, using Christ’s great strength that works so powerfully in me.**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 13?

inVite

Our Only Mediator  
The beast of Revelation is an apostate religious power that rises out of pagan Rome and grows to become a worldwide system of worship. According to Revelation 13:5

**5 The beast was allowed to say proud words and words against God, and it was allowed to use its power for forty-two months.**

, it is a blasphemous power. In the New Testament, blasphemy is equated with assuming the privileges and prerogatives of God as an equal instead of recognizing His superiority and sovereignty as we ought. In Luke 5:18–26

**18 Just then, some men were carrying on a mat a man who was paralyzed. They tried to bring him in and put him down before Jesus. 19 But because there were so many people there, they could not find a way in. So they went up on the roof and lowered the man on his mat through the ceiling into the middle of the crowd right before Jesus. 20 Seeing their faith, Jesus said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.” 21 The Jewish teachers of the law and the Pharisees thought to themselves, “Who is this man who is speaking as if he were God? Only God can forgive sins.” 22 But Jesus knew what they were thinking and said, “Why are you thinking these things? 23 Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up and walk’? 24 But I will prove to you that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So Jesus said to the paralyzed man, “I tell you, stand up, take your mat, and go home.” 25 At once the man stood up before them, picked up his mat, and went home, praising God. 26 All the people were fully amazed and began to praise God. They were filled with much respect and said, “Today we have seen amazing things!”**

Jesus was accused of blasphemy by the religious leaders of His day. In Jesus’ case the accusations were unjust because He had all the powers and prerogatives of God, including the right to forgive our sins, and that is because Jesus is God. Or, as He so powerfully expressed it: “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?” (John 14:9

**9 Jesus answered, “I have been with you a long time now. Do you still not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. So why do you say, ‘Show us the Father’?**

). Meanwhile, 1 Timothy 2:5

**5 There is one God and one mediator so that human beings can reach God. That way is through Christ Jesus, who is himself human.**

teaches that there is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Jesus Christ. In contrast, the Roman Church teaches that the priest is the mediator between God and sinful humanity. But because the priest himself is a sinful human being, he cannot be our mediator, because he too needs a mediator. Blasphemy is also defined as the claim of any man to be God or to stand in the place of God. Here are just two statements from the Roman Church’s authoritative sources: “The pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man. . . . he is as it were GOD on earth” (Lucius Ferraris, “Papa,” in Prompta Bibliotheca [1763], vol. 6, pp. 25–29). Pope Leo XIII boasted: “We [the popes] hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty” (The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII [New York: Benziger, 1903], p. 193). These claims become even more relevant when we understand that the word “anti-,” as in anti-Christ, doesn’t always mean “against” but can also mean “in the place of.” Antichrist therefore also means “in place of Christ.” Talk about blasphemy! Journal: Meditate on this week’s passage again and look for where Jesus is.Where are other forms of blasphemy have you witnessed?How has Jesus been your personal meditator?

inSight

God Rather Than Men  
From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven it has been Satan’s purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator, and though he was cast out of heaven he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. To deceive men, and thus lead them to transgress God’s law, is the object which he has steadfastly pursued. Whether this be accomplished by casting aside the law altogether, or by rejecting one of its precepts, the result will be ultimately the same. . . . In seeking to cast contempt upon the divine statutes, Satan has perverted the doctrines of the Bible, and errors have thus become incorporated into the faith of thousands who profess to believe the Scriptures. The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition. (Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911], 582.) Those who endeavor to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His word; they can honor Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God’s immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? Before His crucifixion the Saviour explained to His disciples that He was to be put to death and to rise again from the tomb, and angels were present to impress His words on minds and hearts. But the disciples were looking for temporal deliverance from the Roman yoke, and they could not tolerate the thought that He in whom all their hopes centered should suffer an ignominious death. The words which they needed to remember were banished from their minds; and when the time of trial came, it found them unprepared. The death of Jesus as fully destroyed their hopes as if He had not forewarned them. So in the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed. Satan watches to catch away every impression that would make them wise unto salvation, and the time of trouble will find them unready. When God sends to men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to heed the message. The fearful judgments denounced against the worship of the beast and his image (Revelation 14:9-11

**9 Then a third angel followed the first two angels, saying in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his idol and gets the beast’s mark on the forehead or on the hand, 10 that one also will drink the wine of God’s anger, which is prepared with all its strength in the cup of his anger. And that person will be put in pain with burning sulfur before the holy angels and the Lamb. 11 And the smoke from their burning pain will rise forever and ever. There will be no rest, day or night, for those who worship the beast and his idol or who get the mark of his name.”**

) should lead all to a diligent study of the prophecies to learn what the mark of the beast is, and how they are to avoid receiving it. But the masses of the people turn away their ears from hearing the truth and are turned unto fables. The apostle Paul declared, looking down to the last days: “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.” 2 Timothy 4:3

**3 because the time will come when people will not listen to the true teaching but will find many more teachers who please them by saying the things they want to hear.**

. That time has fully come. The multitudes do not want Bible truth, because it interferes with the desires of the sinful, world-loving heart; and Satan supplies the deceptions which they love. But God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms. The opinions of learned men, the deductions of science, the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastical councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority—not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith. Before accepting any doctrine or precept, we should demand a plain “Thus saith the Lord” in its support. (White, The Great Controversy, 593–595.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, what has personally impacted you?What are the implications for your social circles?Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

Which appeals to you more, the faith that Jesus had or the faith that we have in Jesus? Why?What does Matthew 27:45–50

**Jesus Dies 45 At noon the whole country became dark, and the darkness lasted for three hours. 46 About three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” This means, “My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?” 47 Some of the people standing there who heard this said, “He is calling Elijah.” 48 Quickly one of them ran and got a sponge and filled it with vinegar and tied it to a stick and gave it to Jesus to drink. 49 But the others said, “Don’t bother him. We want to see if Elijah will come to save him.” 50 But Jesus cried out again in a loud voice and died.**

teach us about what Christ experienced on the cross?What did Jesus mean by asking God why He had forsaken Him?How does this scene help us understand what it means to have “the faith of Jesus”?What are the basic principles behind the sea beast’s claim to authority? In what ways can those same attitudes be lodged in our hearts without our knowing it?How do you respond to those who argue that the idea of a literal Satan is a primitive superstition that educated (or at least intelligent) people can’t take seriously? What are areas in your life in which you need Christ to reign rather than the antichrist or antichrists?

THE SEAL OF GOD AND THE MARK OF THE BEAST: PART 2

inTro

History Repeated  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 14:9–11

**And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, If any man worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead, or upon his hand,he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name.**

History RepeatedIn the fifteenth century the Piedmont valleys, high in the Alps of northern Italy, were home to the Waldenses, a people determined to stay faithful to their understanding of the Bible. As the result of their steadfast loyalty to Christ, they were fiercely persecuted. In a.d. 1488 the Waldenses in the Valley of Loyse were brutally murdered by the Roman Church for their faith. Another wave of persecution against the Waldenses came in the seventeenth century, when the duke of Savoy sent an army of 8,000 into their territory and demanded that the local populace quarter his troops in their homes. The people did as he requested, but the command was a strategy to give the soldiers easy access to their victims. On April 24, 1655, at 4:00 a.m., a signal was given for the massacre to begin. This time the death toll was more than 4,000.History, unfortunately, is often repeated. The mark of the beast prophecy is about the final link in an evil chain of religious persecution that goes back through the ages. Like the persecutions of the past, it is designed to force everyone to conform to a certain set of beliefs and system of worship. As always, however, God will have a people group who refuse to submit.

inGest

Evil Rising and Truth Falling  
As we have already studied, the beast powers of Revelation 13 and 14 represent a worldwide system of false worship. But there’s more. The beast would continue for a specific duration of time. In symbolic time prophecies, a prophetic day equals a literal year, an idea that is supported by Numbers 14:34

**34 For forty years you will suffer for your sins—a year for each of the forty days you explored the land. You will know me as your enemy.’**

: “for every day a year” (RSV). Again, God says, “I have appointed thee each day for a year” (Ezek. 4:6, KJV

**6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again lon thy right side, and thou shalt mbear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: nI have appointed thee †each day for a year.**

). This principle has repeatedly proven itself accurate in interpreting biblical time prophecies, such as with the 70 weeks of Daniel 9:24–27

**24 “God has ordered four hundred ninety years for your people and your holy city for these reasons: to stop people from turning against God; to put an end to sin; to take away evil; to bring in goodness that continues forever; to bring about the vision and prophecy; and to appoint a most holy place. 25 “Learn and understand these things. A command will come to rebuild Jerusalem. The time from this command until the appointed leader comes will be forty-nine years and four hundred thirty-four years. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and a trench filled with water around it, but it will be built in times of trouble. 26 After the four hundred thirty-four years the appointed leader will be killed; he will have nothing. The people of the leader who is to come will destroy the city and the holy place. The end of the city will come like a flood, and war will continue until the end. God has ordered that place to be completely destroyed. 27 That leader will make firm an agreement with many people for seven years. He will stop the offerings and sacrifices after three and one-half years. A destroyer will do blasphemous things until the ordered end comes to the destroyed city.”**

. Calculating the time period of 42 months mentioned in Revelation 13:5

**5 The beast was allowed to say proud words and words against God, and it was allowed to use its power for forty-two months.**

, with 30 days in a month, we come up with 1,260 prophetic days, or literal years. The ancient calendars regularly had 360 days per year. In the fourth century the Roman emperor Constantine legalized Christianity throughout the empire. When he moved his capital in a.d. 330 to Byzantium to unite the eastern and western parts of his empire, it left a political vacuum in Rome. The pope then filled this void, becoming not only a powerful religious leader but also a political force to be reckoned with. In a.d. 538 Justinian, the Roman emperor, officially granted the Roman bishop the role of the defender of the faith. The medieval church exercised great influence from a.d. 538 to a.d. 1798, including during the terrible persecution mentioned in the introduction to this lesson. Napoleon’s general Berthier took the pope captive in a.d. 1798, in exact fulfillment of the prophecy—exactly 1,260 years after the pope came to power in a.d. 538. Berthier and his army captured Pope Pius VI and unceremoniously removed him from the papal throne. The blow to the Papacy was serious, but, according to Revelation 13:12

**12 This beast stands before the first beast and uses the same power the first beast has. By this power it makes everyone living on earth worship the first beast, who had the death wound that was healed.**

, the deadly wound would be healed and the world would hear more from this power. The apostle Paul warned the Christian community of a “falling away” from the truth of God’s Word. He was concerned about the seeds of apostasy already present in the New Testament church, which would flourish in the coming centuries before the second coming of Christ. A counterfeit gospel would come into the church, distorting the Word of God. Satan is the one behind this apostasy. He is the true “man of sin” who desires to exalt “himself above all that is called God” and sit in the “temple of God” as if he himself is God (2 Thess. 2:3

**3 Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away n from God happens and the Man of Evil, n who is on his way to hell, appears.**

, 4

**4 He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God’s Temple and sit there and say that he is God.**

). The “great deceiver” works through human agencies to accomplish his purposes. The identifying characteristics in Daniel and Revelation reveal that the little horn of Daniel 7, the sea beast of Revelation 13, and the “lawless one” of 2 Thessalonians 2 represent the same entity. The SDA Bible Commentary states it this way: “A comparison with Daniel’s prophecy of the blasphemous power that succeeds that of pagan Rome . . . and with John’s word picture of the leopardlike beast . . . reveals many similarities between the three descriptions [the little horn, the beast power, and the lawless one]. This leads us to the conclusion that Daniel, Paul, and John are speaking of the same power, . . . the papacy” (vol. 7, p. 271). It is extremely important to remember that these biblical prophecies are describing a system of religion that has compromised God’s Word, substituted human traditions for the gospel, and drifted away from biblical truth. They are given by a God of incredible love to prepare a people for the coming of Christ as well as to rebuke the apostate religious organizations that have departed from God’s Word. However, it is important to note that though He rebukes the corrupt systems of religion, He does not necessarily rebuke the people in them (see Rev. 18:4

**4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying: “Come out of that city, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive the disasters that will come to her.**

). The three angels’ messages expose a system that has deceived millions. Though deceived, these people are much loved by Christ. We must treat them accordingly. Journal: Pause and think how amazing biblical prophecy is and how it reveals to us God’s knowledge of future events. What should this teach us about why we can trust the Lord’s promises, even the ones we don’t yet see fulfilled?How can we apply Matthew 7:12

**The Most Important Rule 12 “Do to others what you want them to do to you. This is the meaning of the law of Moses and the teaching of the prophets.**

in dealing with the theme of the beast powers in Revelation 13 and 14?

inTerpret

Satan’s Final Strategy  
Surveys reveal a deep lack of trust in institutions and governments. Millions wonder where—or if—we can find someone who is morally fit to lead the world. Revelation’s prophecies identify the beast power as the one who, under the auspices of a religiopolitical union, will be perceived as fit to fill this role. There are three significant points John makes in Revelation 17:12–14

**12 “The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet begun to rule, but they will receive power to rule with the beast for one hour. 13 All ten of these kings have the same purpose, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. 14 They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. He will defeat them with his called, chosen, and faithful followers.”**

: First, the political powers have “one mind” and “give their power and authority” to the beast. Second, this conglomerate alliance of error makes war against Jesus the Lamb. Third, in earth’s last war, Christ and His followers are triumphant. The beast does not win; Jesus does. Have you ever wondered what strategy the devil might use to unite the nations? As observed in the recurrent times of persecution, history often repeats itself. We therefore discover valuable lessons from the collapse of the Roman Empire. When the Germanic invasions from the north threatened Western Europe, the Roman emperor Constantine turned to religion. The authority of the church combined with the power of the state became the very instrument Constantine needed. The continual strengthening of the idea of a sacred Sunday in the fourth century was a calculated political and religious move to unite the empire in a time of crisis. Constantine wanted his empire united, and the Roman Church wanted it “converted.” The renowned historian Arthur Weigall states it clearly: “The church made a sacred day of Sunday . . . largely because it was the weekly festival of the sun; for it was a definite Christian policy to take over the pagan festivals endeared to the people by tradition and give them Christian significance” (The Paganism in Our Christianity [New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1928], p. 145). At a time of great crisis, when all the world is scared, hurting, and fearful, people will be desperate for someone to bring stability and protection. This is how tyranny has arisen in the past, and there’s no reason to think it could not happen again. According to prophecy, something will bring about these final events. Though it’s impossible to know how all this will unfold, the world has already seen how great changes can come—sometimes very quickly. Though we don’t know details about what is coming, we need to be ready for whatever it is. Revelation 14:9

**9 Then a third angel followed the first two angels, saying in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his idol and gets the beast’s mark on the forehead or on the hand,**

and 14:12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

describe two distinct groups. One worships the beast, and one has the faith of Jesus and keeps the commandments of God—including the fourth, the one commandment the beast power thought to change. That’s the contrast. Working through the sea and land beasts, the devil attempts to undermine God’s authority by attacking the heart of worship—namely, the Sabbath. The mark of the beast is placed either on the forehead or the hand. The forehead is a symbol of the mind, where conscience, reason, and judgment are located. The hand, in contrast, is a symbol of actions and deeds. “We have tended to overlook the fact that Sunday is the day of worship of the opposing forces . . . in the story line of the Book of Revelation. Sunday is an extremely important symbol, revealing the unbelievable craftiness and sophistry of the dragon. . . . This . . . change of God’s law expresses in one simple action the very essence of the hatred of the dragon against God in the cosmic conflict. Its simplicity is highly deceptive. The dragon has sought to usurp God’s place in the cosmos by depicting himself as the true object of worship and arguing that God’s law is unjust—that it should be changed. The dragon changed the law at the juncture within the Decalogue where God is identified as Creator and Redeemer, the only one worthy of worship (Exod. 20:8–11

**8 “Remember to keep the Sabbath holy. 9 Work and get everything done during six days each week, 10 but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities. 11 The reason is that in six days the Lord made everything—the sky, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. On the seventh day he rested. So the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

; Deut. 5

**The Ten Commandments 5 Moses called all the people of Israel together and said: Listen, Israel, to the commands and laws I am giving you today. Learn them and obey them carefully. 2 The Lord our God made an Agreement with us at Mount Sinai. 3 He did not make this Agreement with our ancestors, but he made it with us, with all of us who are alive here today. 4 The Lord spoke to you face to face from the fire on the mountain. 5 (At that time I stood between you and the Lord in order to tell you what the Lord said; you were afraid of the fire, so you would not go up on the mountain.) The Lord said: 6 “I am the Lord your God; I brought you out of the land of Egypt where you were slaves. 7 “You must not have any other gods except me. 8 “You must not make for yourselves any idols or anything to worship that looks like something in the sky above or on the earth below or in the water below the land. 9 You must not worship or serve any idol, because I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God. If people sin against me and hate me, I will punish their children, even their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. 10 But I will be very kind for a thousand lifetimes to those who love me and obey my commands. 11 “You must not use the name of the Lord your God thoughtlessly, because the Lord will punish anyone who uses his name in this way. 12 “Keep the Sabbath as a holy day, as the Lord your God has commanded you. 13 You may work and get everything done during six days each week, 14 but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your ox, your donkey, or any of your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities. That way your servants may rest as you do. 15 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there by his great power and strength. So the Lord your God has commanded you to rest on the Sabbath day. 16 “Honor your father and your mother as the Lord your God has commanded you. Then you will live a long time, and things will go well for you in the land that the Lord your God is going to give you. 17 “You must not murder anyone. 18 “You must not be guilty of adultery. 19 “You must not steal. 20 “You must not tell lies about your neighbor. 21 “You must not want to take your neighbor’s wife. You must not want to take your neighbor’s house or land, his male or female slaves, his ox or his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.” 22 The Lord spoke these commands to all of you on the mountain in a loud voice out of the fire, the cloud, and the deep darkness; he did not say anything else. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets, and he gave them to me. 23 When you heard the voice from the darkness, as the mountain was blazing with fire, all the leaders of your tribes and your elders came to me. 24 And you said, “The Lord our God has shown us his glory and majesty, and we have heard his voice from the fire. Today we have seen that a person can live even if God speaks to him. 25 But now, we will die! This great fire will burn us up, and we will die if we hear the Lord our God speak anymore. 26 No human being has ever heard the living God speaking from a fire and still lived, but we have. 27 Moses, you go near and listen to everything the Lord our God says. Then you tell us what the Lord our God tells you, and we will listen and obey.” 28 The Lord heard what you said to me, and he said to me, “I have heard what the people said to you. Everything they said was good. 29 I wish their hearts would always respect me and that they would always obey my commands so that things would go well for them and their children forever! 30 “Go and tell the people to return to their tents, 31 but you stay here with me so that I may give you all the commands, rules, and laws that you must teach the people to obey in the land I am giving them as their own.” 32 So be careful to do what the Lord your God has commanded you, and follow the commands exactly. 33 Live the way the Lord your God has commanded you so that you may live and have what is good and have a long life in the land you will take.**

; cf. Rev. 4:11

**11  “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you made all things. Everything existed and was made, because you wanted it.”**

; 5:9

**9 And they all sang a new song to the Lamb: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were killed, and with the blood of your death you bought people for God from every tribe, language, people, and nation.**

, 13

**13 Then I heard all creatures in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea saying: “To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power forever and ever.”**

, 14

**14 The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders bowed down and worshiped.**

). The change of the law manifests not only the dragon’s hatred for the will of the Lord (the law), but it is also his attempt to usurp God’s place by becoming the object of worship. . . . The universalization of this change in the law would assure him victory. (Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, “The Closing of the Cosmic Conflict: Role of the Three Angels’ Messages,” unpublished manuscript, 53, 54). The day is coming, possibly sooner than we think, when laws restricting our religious liberty will be passed. Those who diligently follow the Word of God and keep the true Sabbath of the Lord will be labeled as opposers of unity and of the overall good of society. Revelation predicts that in the future, at a time of international crisis, our world is going to face some kind of radical political, social, religious, and moral transformation, in which Sundaykeeping will be enforced and will become “the mark of the beast.” Interestingly, or perhaps tellingly, the church of Rome claims that Sunday is the “mark” of its ecclesiastical authority: “Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act. . . . And the act is a mark of her ecclesiastical power and authority in religious matters” (American Catholic Quarterly Review, January 1883). Again, we have not been told how all of this will unfold. Scripture gives us only broad outlines, but enough to show us that the great controversy is going to climax around the issue of worshiping either the beast or the Creator, and that the seventh-day Sabbath will play a central role in the conflict. Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?In what ways has humanity always been divided along the lines of being on either God’s side or on Satan’s? Why can there be no middle ground?

inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Satan’s final deceptions? Revelation 12:6

**6 The woman ran away into the desert to a place God prepared for her where she would be taken care of for one thousand two hundred sixty days.**

, 14

**14 But the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle so she could fly to the place prepared for her in the desert. There she would be taken care of for three and one-half years, away from the snake.**

Daniel 7:25

**25 This king will speak against the Most High God, and he will hurt and kill God’s holy people. He will try to change times and laws that have already been set. The holy people that belong to God will be in that king’s power for three and one-half years.**

2 Thessalonians 2:3

**3 Do not let anyone fool you in any way. That day of the Lord will not come until the turning away n from God happens and the Man of Evil, n who is on his way to hell, appears.**

, 4

**4 He will be against and put himself above any so-called god or anything that people worship. And that Man of Evil will even go into God’s Temple and sit there and say that he is God.**

Deuteronomy 6:8

**8 Write them down and tie them to your hands as a sign. Tie them on your forehead to remind you,**

; 11:18

**18 Remember my words with your whole being. Write them down and tie them to your hands as a sign; tie them on your foreheads to remind you.**

1 Corinthians 10:11–13

**11 The things that happened to those people are examples. They were written down to teach us, because we live in a time when all these things of the past have reached their goal. 12 If you think you are strong, you should be careful not to fall. 13 The only temptation that has come to you is that which everyone has. But you can trust God, who will not permit you to be tempted more than you can stand. But when you are tempted, he will also give you a way to escape so that you will be able to stand it.**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 14:9–11

**9 Then a third angel followed the first two angels, saying in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his idol and gets the beast’s mark on the forehead or on the hand, 10 that one also will drink the wine of God’s anger, which is prepared with all its strength in the cup of his anger. And that person will be put in pain with burning sulfur before the holy angels and the Lamb. 11 And the smoke from their burning pain will rise forever and ever. There will be no rest, day or night, for those who worship the beast and his idol or who get the mark of his name.”**

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inVite

The Sabbath Test  
Perhaps even now, the stage is being set for this impending persecution. On June 6, 2012, Pope Benedict XVI made an urgent appeal to more than 15,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square in Rome, proclaiming that Sunday must be a day of rest for everyone so that people can be free to be with their families and with God. “By defending Sunday, one defends human freedom.” This, of course, isn’t the same thing as demanding that others keep this day as opposed to the biblical Sabbath, but it does show that the idea of Sunday as the “day of rest” is a real issue. Laws will be passed sooner or later, and those who faithfully follow the Word of God and keep the true Sabbath will be labeled opposers to society’s best interests. In this time of crisis God’s faithful people will, by His grace and through His power, stand firm in their convictions to follow Him. They will not yield to the pressure. Instead of the mark of the beast, they will receive the seal of God. In ancient times seals were used to attest to the authenticity of official documents. We would then expect to find God’s seal embedded in His law. Ancient seals were a distinctive, individualized mark. Isaiah the prophet says, “Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples” (Isa. 8:16

**16  Make an agreement. Seal up the teaching while my followers are watching.**

). The fourth commandment contains three elements of an authentic seal: first, the name of the Sealer: “The Lord your God” (Exod. 20:10

**10 but the seventh day is a day of rest to honor the Lord your God. On that day no one may do any work: not you, your son or daughter, your male or female slaves, your animals, or the foreigners living in your cities.**

); second, the title of the Sealer: the Lord who “made,” or the Creator (verse 11); and third, the territory of the Sealer: “the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them” (verse 11). According to Revelation 7:1–3

**The 144,000 People of Israel 7 After the vision of these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth. The angels were holding the four winds of the earth to keep them from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel coming up from the east who had the seal of the living God. And he called out in a loud voice to the four angels to whom God had given power to harm the earth and the sea. 3 He said to them, “Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we mark with a sign the foreheads of the people who serve our God.”**

, the seal of God is placed only on our foreheads, a symbol of our minds. Jesus respects our freedom of choice. He invites us to let Him shape our minds by His Holy Spirit so that we cannot be moved from the anchor of our faith in the Word of God (Eph. 4:30

**30 And do not make the Holy Spirit sad. The Spirit is God’s proof that you belong to him. God gave you the Spirit to show that God will make you free when the final day comes.**

). Thus, we understand that the faithful are those who “keep the commandments of God, and [have] the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

), and included in those commandments is the fourth, the one commandment the beast power thought to change. Journal: Meditate on this week’s passage again and look for where Jesus is.What conditions can you see currently developing that could potentially lead to the restrictions of our religious liberty? What obstacles remain, as well?How do you see Jesus differently after this week’s study?

inSight

Endgame  
Satan’s policy in this final conflict with God’s people is the same that he employed in the opening of the great controversy in heaven. He professed to be seeking to promote the stability of the divine government, while secretly bending every effort to secure its overthrow. And the very work which he was thus endeavoring to accomplish he charged upon the loyal angels. The same policy of deception has marked the history of the Roman Church. It has professed to act as the vicegerent of Heaven, while seeking to exalt itself above God and to change His law. Under the rule of Rome, those who suffered death for their fidelity to the gospel were denounced as evildoers; they were declared to be in league with Satan; and every possible means was employed to cover them with reproach, to cause them to appear in the eyes of the people and even to themselves as the vilest of criminals. So it will be now. While Satan seeks to destroy those who honor God’s law, he will cause them to be accused as lawbreakers, as men who are dishonoring God and bringing judgments upon the world. God never forces the will or the conscience; but Satan’s constant resort—to gain control of those whom he cannot otherwise seduce—is compulsion by cruelty. Through fear or force he endeavors to rule the conscience and to secure homage to himself. To accomplish this, he works through both religious and secular authorities, moving them to the enforcement of human laws in defiance of the law of God. Those who honor the Bible Sabbath will be denounced as enemies of law and order, as breaking down the moral restraints of society, causing anarchy and corruption, and calling down the judgments of God upon the earth. Their conscientious scruples will be pronounced obstinacy, stubbornness, and contempt of authority. They will be accused of disaffection toward the government. Ministers who deny the obligation of the divine law will present from the pulpit the duty of yielding obedience to the civil authorities as ordained of God. In legislative halls and courts of justice, commandment keepers will be misrepresented and condemned. A false coloring will be given to their words; the worst construction will be put upon their motives. As the Protestant churches reject the clear, Scriptural arguments in defense of God’s law, they will long to silence those whose faith they cannot overthrow by the Bible. Though they blind their own eyes to the fact, they are now adopting a course which will lead to the persecution of those who conscientiously refuse to do what the rest of the Christian world are doing, and acknowledge the claims of the papal sabbath. The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected. In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet’s words: “The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17

**17 Then the dragon was very angry at the woman, and he went off to make war against all her other children—those who obey God’s commands and who have the message Jesus taught.**

. (Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911], 591, 592.) The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful in ages past is still seeking to rid the earth of those who fear God and obey His law. Satan will excite indignation against the humble minority who conscientiously refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith. By false representations and angry appeals they will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a “Thus saith the Scriptures” to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for a Sunday law. Those who fear God cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Now, as in the days of Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people. By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near. (Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948], vol. 5, 450, 451.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, what are your personal takeaways?What are the takeaways for the organizations, circles, and communities that you are a part of?Review the memory verse.How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

In what ways has Satan’s end-time strategy been clarified for you?In what ways has Christ’s plan and assurance of salvation been clarified for you?What lessons can we take away from what has been written in Ezekiel 20:1–20

**Israel Has Refused God 20 It was the seventh year of our captivity, in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month. Some of the elders of Israel came to ask about the Lord and sat down in front of me. 2 The Lord spoke his word to me, saying: 3 “Human, speak to the elders of Israel and say to them: ‘This is what the Lord God says: Did you come to ask me questions? As surely as I live, I will not let you ask me questions.’ 4 “Will you judge them? Will you judge them, human? Let them know the hateful things their ancestors did. 5 Say to them: ‘This is what the Lord God says: When I chose Israel, I made a promise to the descendants of Jacob. I made myself known to them in Egypt, and I promised them, “I am the Lord your God.” 6 At that time I promised them I would bring them out of Egypt into a land I had found for them, a fertile land, the best land in the world. 7 I said to them, “Each one of you must throw away the hateful idols you have seen and liked. Don’t make yourselves unclean with the idols of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.” 8 “ ‘But they turned against me and refused to listen to me. They did not throw away the hateful idols which they saw and liked; they did not give up the idols of Egypt. Then I decided to pour out my anger against them while they were still in Egypt. 9 But I acted for the sake of my name so it would not be dishonored in full view of the nations where the Israelites lived. I made myself known to the Israelites with a promise to bring them out of Egypt while the nations were watching. 10 So I took them out of Egypt and brought them into the desert. 11 I gave them my rules and told them about my laws, by which people will live if they obey them. 12 I also gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between us so they would know that I am the Lord who made them holy. 13 “ ‘But in the desert Israel turned against me. They did not follow my rules, and they rejected my laws, by which people will live if they obey them. They dishonored my Sabbaths. Then I decided to pour out my anger against them and destroy them in the desert. 14 But I acted for the sake of my name so it would not be dishonored in full view of the nations who watched as I had brought the Israelites out of Egypt. 15 And in the desert I swore to the Israelites that I would not bring them into the land I had given them. It is a fertile land, the best land in the world. 16 This was because they rejected my laws and did not follow my rules. They dishonored my Sabbaths and wanted to worship their idols. 17 But I had pity on them. I did not destroy them or put an end to them in the desert. 18 I said to their children in the desert, “Don’t live by the rules of your parents, or obey their laws. Don’t make yourselves unclean with their idols. 19 I am the Lord your God. Live by my rules, obey my laws, and follow them. 20 Keep my Sabbaths holy, and they will be a sign between me and you. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God.”**

?How can we know, for sure, just whose side we really are on?What are the dangers of both extremes when it comes to biblical prophecy?When it comes to biblical prophecy, why must we be careful not to get into fanaticism, date setting, or speculating beyond what has been revealed to us through inspiration?What have been the results when the expected events have not unfolded when and how people have said they would happen (e.g., the Great Disappointment)?How do we respond to those who say our scenario about the mark of the beast and persecution cannot happen because it just doesn’t seem possible given the current state of the world?How quickly have you seen great changes come to the world? Name some examples!

ABLAZE WITH GOD’S GLORY

inTro

Church Rising  
Read This Week’s Passage: Revelation 18:1–4

**After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory.And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird.For by the wine of the wrath of her fornication all the nations are fallen; and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her wantonness.And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues:**

Church RisingSooner or later, final events will begin to unfold. We have not been told exactly when and how, but we have been told enough. Some kind of legislation enforcing Sunday-keeping in contrast to Sabbath-keeping will be passed. Revelation has revealed to us the crucial issues at stake, the crucial players involved, and, in broad sweeps, has depicted what will happen when instead of worshiping of the One “who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” (Rev. 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

), people—all “whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8

**8 And all who live on earth will worship the beast—all the people since the beginning of the world whose names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life. The Lamb is the One who was killed.**

)—will worship the beast and his image. In other words, the names of all who have chosen to follow the Lord Jesus Christ and obey His commandments will remain in the book of life. How much better to be in the register of God than in the records of man!God has raised up the Seventh-day Adventist Church to preach this message to the world. We therefore need to be believers of the truth as it is in Jesus, and we need to have been transformed and made new by the “everlasting gospel” of Revelation 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

, which is centered on Christ’s death for us, the assurance of our salvation in Him, as well as the future hope of the end of sin and complete restoration in the new earth.

inGest

Preparing for the Final Crisis  
The apostle Paul urged the believers at Thessalonica to “watch and be sober” in the context of the second coming of Christ (1 Thess. 5:6

**6 So we should not be like other people who are sleeping, but we should be alert and have self-control.**

). He also declared that they were “children of the light” (verse 5, NIV) and that they were “not in darkness so that this day [the return of Christ] should surprise [them] like a thief” (verse 4, NIV). If Paul urged the devout Thessalonian believers in this way, how much more would he urge us today? Jesus used the word “watch” in connection with earnest, heartfelt prayer (Matt. 24:42

**42 “So always be ready, because you don’t know the day your Lord will come.**

; 26:40

**40 Then Jesus went back to his followers and found them asleep. He said to Peter, “You men could not stay awake with me for one hour?**

, 41

**41 Stay awake and pray for strength against temptation. The spirit wants to do what is right, but the body is weak.”**

). To watch is to be spiritually alert. To be sober-minded is to take seriously the times we live in and be focused on the things that really matter. Ellen G. White adds that “we who know the truth should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise” (Testimonies for the Church [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948], vol. 8, p. 28). While Christ’s second coming might be a surprise to the world, it certainly should not be a surprise for us. Though we don’t know when it will happen, we can see enough, both in the Bible and in the world events around us, to know that it is coming, and that now, today, is the day to be ready. There is no time to waste. Christ has given us the three angels’ messages so we can prepare for what we know is coming. The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, combined with the modern gift of prophecy, provide divine insight into the future events of this world. The prophetic Word of God outlines salvation history in advance, and the prophecies of Daniel 2, which were fulfilled exactly as predicted, provide powerful, rational evidence that we can trust God. God’s final appeal to His people is to flee the errors of Babylon and walk in the light of eternal truth found in His Word (Rev. 18

**Babylon Is Destroyed 18 After the vision of these things, I saw another angel coming down from heaven. This angel had great power, and his glory made the earth bright. 2 He shouted in a powerful voice: “Ruined, ruined is the great city of Babylon! She has become a home for demons and a prison for every evil spirit, and a prison for every unclean bird and unclean beast. 3  She has been ruined, because all the peoples of the earth have drunk the wine of the desire of her sexual sin. She has been ruined also because the kings of the earth have sinned sexually with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the great wealth of her luxury.” 4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying: “Come out of that city, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive the disasters that will come to her. 5  Her sins have piled up as high as the sky, and God has not forgotten the wrongs she has done. 6  Give that city the same as she gave to others. Pay her back twice as much as she did. Prepare wine for her that is twice as strong as the wine she prepared for others. 7  She gave herself much glory and rich living. Give her that much suffering and sadness. She says to herself, ‘I am a queen sitting on my throne. I am not a widow; I will never be sad.’ 8  So these disasters will come to her in one day: death, and crying, and great hunger, and she will be destroyed by fire, because the Lord God who judges her is powerful.” 9 The kings of the earth who sinned sexually with her and shared her wealth will see the smoke from her burning. Then they will cry and be sad because of her death. 10 They will be afraid of her suffering and stand far away and say: “Terrible! How terrible for you, great city, powerful city of Babylon, because your punishment has come in one hour!” 11 And the merchants of the earth will cry and be sad about her, because now there is no one to buy their cargoes—12 cargoes of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, red cloth; all kinds of citron wood and all kinds of things made from ivory, expensive wood, bronze, iron, and marble; 13 cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, carriages, slaves, and human lives. 14 The merchants will say, “Babylon, the good things you wanted are gone from you. All your rich and fancy things have disappeared. You will never have them again.” 15 The merchants who became rich from selling to her will be afraid of her suffering and will stand far away. They will cry and be sad 16 and say: “Terrible! How terrible for the great city! She was dressed in fine linen, purple and red cloth, and she was shining with gold, precious jewels, and pearls! 17  All these riches have been destroyed in one hour!” Every sea captain, every passenger, the sailors, and all those who earn their living from the sea stood far away from Babylon. 18 As they saw the smoke from her burning, they cried out loudly, “There was never a city like this great city!” 19 And they threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and being sad. They said: “Terrible! How terrible for the great city! All the people who had ships on the sea became rich because of her wealth! But she has been destroyed in one hour! 20  Be happy because of this, heaven! Be happy, God’s holy people and apostles and prophets! God has punished her because of what she did to you.” 21 Then a powerful angel picked up a large stone, like one used for grinding grain, and threw it into the sea. He said: “In the same way, the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, and it will never be found again. 22  The music of people playing harps and other instruments, flutes, and trumpets, will never be heard in you again. No workman doing any job will ever be found in you again. The sound of grinding grain will never be heard in you again. 23  The light of a lamp will never shine in you again, and the voices of a bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world’s great people, and all the nations were tricked by your magic. 24  You are guilty of the death of the prophets and God’s holy people and all who have been killed on earth.”**

). The key to everything is the Bible. As long as people stick to the Bible and follow what it teaches, they will not be deceived in the final crisis—particularly regarding the Sabbath. The message of the second angel further appeals to us to accept truth rather than error, Scripture rather than tradition, and the teachings of God’s Word rather than the false doctrines proclaimed by many fallen organizations. The third angel’s message presents a warning against the mark of the beast. Throughout the prophecies of the Bible, a beast consistently represents a political or religious power. Eventually this religious power extended its influence over the whole world and led a movement to unite church and state. The goal was to achieve world unity at a time of economic upheaval, natural catastrophes, social turmoil, international political crisis, and global conflict. As Ellen G. White says, the United States will eventually take the lead in this global confederation (see lesson 10). These messages conclude with an urgent appeal for Christ’s faithful followers to keep the commandments of God through fostering the living faith of Jesus in their hearts (Rev. 14:12

**12 This means God’s holy people must be patient. They must obey God’s commands and keep their faith in Jesus.**

). Journal: What does 1 Thessalonians 5:6

**6 So we should not be like other people who are sleeping, but we should be alert and have self-control.**

’s “not sleep, as others do” mean?How do you know if you’re sleeping? What will it take to wake us?

inTerpret

Illuminated With Glory  
God has raised up an end-time people to stand on the shoulders of the great reformers of the past with the Bible as their only creed, Christ alone as their source of salvation, the Holy Spirit as their only source of strength, and the return of our Lord as the consummation of all their hopes. Truths long obscured by the darkness of error and tradition, including the true biblical Sabbath, will be proclaimed to the world just before our Lord returns. The three angels’ messages gave rise to this last-day movement to complete the Reformation and to participate with Christ in finishing His work on earth. The great prophecies of the last book of the Bible reveal a divine movement arising out of disappointment to proclaim God’s final message to the world. Revelation 14 describes a church that spans the globe, spreading the good news of the eternal gospel to every person on earth. The three angels of Revelation 14 are joined by a fourth in chapter 18. This angel gives power to the proclamation of the three angels so that the world is illuminated with glory (Rev. 18:1

**Babylon Is Destroyed 18 After the vision of these things, I saw another angel coming down from heaven. This angel had great power, and his glory made the earth bright.**

). Chapter 18 focuses on the major events that will lead up to the climax of human history and the final, ultimate triumph of the gospel. The angel who comes down from the glorious presence of God in the throne room of the sanctuary was commissioned to proclaim God’s last message of mercy and to warn the inhabitants of the earth of the calamities and triumph that are coming. The text says that the angel comes with “great authority” (Rev. 18:1, NKJV

**The Fall of Babylon the Great 18 After athese things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, band the earth was illuminated with his glory.**

). The New Testament Greek word for “authority” is exousia. Jesus uses this word in the Gospel of Matthew when sending His disciples out. In Matthew 10:1

**Jesus Sends Out His Apostles 10 Jesus called his twelve followers together and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every kind of disease and sickness.**

, Jesus gives His disciples “authority” (NIV) over the principalities and powers of evil. He sends them out with the divine power to be victorious in the battle between good and evil. In Matthew 28:18

**18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All power in heaven and on earth is given to me.**

, 19

**19 So go and make followers of all people in the world. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.**

, He once again sends them out, but this time with “all authority” in heaven and on earth to go and “make disciples of all the nations.” The great controversy between good and evil in the universe is also about God’s honor, or His reputation. Satan, a rebel angel, has declared that God is unjust—that He demands worship but gives little in return. The evil one declares that God’s law restricts our freedom and limits our joy. Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection demolished that false claim. The One who created us plunged into the sin of this world to redeem us. On the cross He answered Satan’s charges and demonstrated that God is both loving and just. Won by His love and concerned for His honor, His end-time people reveal His glory—His loving, self-sacrificing character to a self-centered, godless world, and the earth is illuminated by the character of God. God’s glory is His character. The earth will be filled with the glory of God when we are filled with the love of God and our characters are changed by that redeeming love. Revealing His love in our personal lives reveals His glory, His character, to the world. The last message to be proclaimed to a world engulfed in spiritual darkness, the one carried by three angels, is a command to “fear God and give glory to Him” (Rev. 14:7

**7 He preached in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water.”**

). There is no glory for ourselves in our good works, our righteousness, or our goodness. Ellen G. White affirms this, saying, “The message of Christ’s righteousness is to sound from one end of the earth to the other. . . . This is the glory of God which closes the work of the third angel” (Testimonies for the Church, vol 6, p. 19). White also writes: “What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which it is not in his power to do for himself” (Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1923], p. 456). No glory for ourselves, but yes, all the glory to God. Journal: What questions emerge after studying this lesson? What parts are difficult?What other principles and conclusions do you find?Whose authority are you following now? How do you know?

inSpect

What relationship do the following verses have with Revelation 18? John 7:17

**17 If people choose to do what God wants, they will know that my teaching comes from God and not from me.**

; 8:32

**32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”**

; 17:17

**17 Make them ready for your service through your truth; your teaching is truth.**

Habakkuk 2:14

**14  Then, just as water covers the sea, people everywhere will know the Lord’s glory.**

1 Thessalonians 5:1–6

**Be Ready for the Lord’s Coming 5 Now, brothers and sisters, we do not need to write you about times and dates. 2 You know very well that the day the Lord comes again will be a surprise, like a thief that comes in the night. 3 While people are saying, “We have peace and we are safe,” they will be destroyed quickly. It is like pains that come quickly to a woman having a baby. Those people will not escape. 4 But you, brothers and sisters, are not living in darkness, and so that day will not surprise you like a thief. 5 You are all people who belong to the light and to the day. We do not belong to the night or to darkness. 6 So we should not be like other people who are sleeping, but we should be alert and have self-control.**

Revelation 4:11

**11  “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you made all things. Everything existed and was made, because you wanted it.”**

; 5:6

**6 Then I saw a Lamb standing in the center of the throne and in the middle of the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb looked as if he had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that were sent into all the world.**

, 12

**12 saying in a loud voice: “The Lamb who was killed is worthy to receive power, wealth, wisdom, and strength, honor, glory, and praise!”**

; 19:1

**People in Heaven Praise God 19 After this vision and announcement I heard what sounded like a great many people in heaven saying: “Hallelujah! n Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God,**

Exodus 33:18

**Moses Sees God’s Glory 18 Then Moses said, “Now, please show me your glory.”**

, 19

**19 The Lord answered, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will announce my name, the Lord, so you can hear it. I will show kindness to anyone to whom I want to show kindness, and I will show mercy to anyone to whom I want to show mercy.**

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Revelation 18?

inVite

The Lamb, the Slain Lamb  
There are many symbols in Revelation, biblical symbols of importance such as a dragon in heaven (Rev. 12:3

**3 Then another wonder appeared in heaven: There was a giant red dragon with seven heads and seven crowns on each head. He also had ten horns.**

, 4

**4 His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and threw them down to the earth. He stood in front of the woman who was ready to give birth so he could eat her baby as soon as it was born.**

, 7

**7 Then there was a war in heaven. Michael n and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.**

), angels flying in the midst of heaven (Rev. 14:6

**The Three Angels 6 Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people.**

), and a woman riding a scarlet beast (Rev. 17:3

**3 Then the angel carried me away by the Spirit to the desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a red beast. It was covered with names against God written on it, and it had seven heads and ten horns.**

). The Holy Spirit inspired John to include them in the Word of God, and they have important roles in revealing truth to those who read the words of this book and do them, for as it says, “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near” (Rev. 1:3

**3 Blessed is the one who reads the words of God’s message, and blessed are the people who hear this message and do what is written in it. The time is near when all of this will happen.**

). There is, however, another image that appears over and over all through the book of Revelation. It describes Him as not only a Lamb, but a Lamb “slain” (Rev. 5:6

**6 Then I saw a Lamb standing in the center of the throne and in the middle of the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb looked as if he had been killed. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that were sent into all the world.**

, 12

**12 saying in a loud voice: “The Lamb who was killed is worthy to receive power, wealth, wisdom, and strength, honor, glory, and praise!”**

; Rev. 13:8

**8 And all who live on earth will worship the beast—all the people since the beginning of the world whose names are not written in the Lamb’s book of life. The Lamb is the One who was killed.**

)—that is, Jesus Christ crucified. Here is the heart and soul, not only of the book of Revelation and of the three angels’ messages but also of the whole Bible. We cannot be faithful to our calling, we cannot do the work that God has raised up this church to do, unless we have the slain Lamb, Jesus crucified as a sacrifice for our sins, as the focal point of our message. Ángel Manuel Rodriguez explains this reality as follows: “We must intentionally place the Lamb that was slain at the very center of our doctrines and mission and at the heart of every sermon we preach, every article we write, every prayer we make, every song we sing, every Bible study we give, and in everything we do. Let the love revealed by the Lamb on the cross transform the way we treat each other and move us to also care for the world” (“The Closing of the Cosmic Conflict: Role of the Three Angels’ Messages,” unpublished manuscript, 70). In other words, amid the imagery of dangerous beasts, of a dragon making war, of plagues, of persecution, and of the mark of the beast, there remains front and center the slain Lamb. And He alone, and what He has done for us, is doing now, and will do before it’s all over; He is ultimately what the three angels’ messages are all about. Journal: Meditate on this week’s passage again and look for where Jesus is.Why is keeping the slain Lamb at the center of our message crucial not only for leading others to it but also for your own spiritual life?

inSight

The Brightest Lights  
Humanity has in itself no light. Apart from Christ we are like an unkindled taper, like the moon when her face is turned away from the sun; we have not a single ray of brightness to shed into the darkness of the world. But when we turn toward the Sun of Righteousness, when we come in touch with Christ, the whole soul is aglow with the brightness of the divine presence. Christ’s followers are to be more than a light in the midst of men. They are the light of the world. Jesus says to all who have named His name, You have given yourselves to Me, and I have given you to the world as My representatives. As the Father had sent Him into the world, so, He declares, “have I also sent them into the world.” John 17:18

**18 I have sent them into the world, just as you sent me into the world.**

. As Christ is the channel for the revelation of the Father, so we are to be the channel for the revelation of Christ. While our Saviour is the great source of illumination, forget not, O Christian, that He is revealed through humanity. God’s blessings are bestowed through human instrumentality. Christ Himself came to the world as the Son of man. Humanity, united to the divine nature, must touch humanity. The church of Christ, every individual disciple of the Master, is heaven’s appointed channel for the revelation of God to men. Angels of glory wait to communicate through you heaven’s light and power to souls that are ready to perish. Shall the human agent fail of accomplishing his appointed work? Oh, then to that degree is the world robbed of the promised influence of the Holy Spirit! But Jesus did not bid the disciples, “Strive to make your light shine;” He said, “Let it shine.” If Christ is dwelling in the heart, it is impossible to conceal the light of His presence. If those who profess to be followers of Christ are not the light of the world, it is because the vital power has left them; if they have no light to give, it is because they have no connection with the Source of light. (Ellen G. White, Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1956], 40, 41.) The angel who unites in the proclamation of the third angel’s message is to lighten the whole earth with his glory. A work of world-wide extent and unwonted power is here foretold. The advent movement of 1840-44 was a glorious manifestation of the power of God; the first angel’s message was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century; but these are to be exceeded by the mighty movement under the last warning of the third angel. The work will be similar to that of the Day of Pentecost. As the “former rain” was given, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the opening of the gospel, to cause the upspringing of the precious seed, so the “latter rain” will be given at its close for the ripening of the harvest. “Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.” Hosea 6:3

**3 and know him. Let’s try to learn about the Lord; he will come to us as surely as the dawn comes. He will come to us like rain, like the spring rain that waters the ground.”**

. “Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.” Joel 2:23

**23  So be happy, people of Jerusalem; be joyful in the Lord your God. Because he does what is right, he has brought you rain; he has sent the fall rain and the spring rain for you, as before.**

. “In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.” “And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Acts 2:17

**17  ‘God says: In the last days I will pour out my Spirit on all kinds of people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.**

, 21

**21  Then anyone who calls on the Lord will be saved.’ Joel 2:28–32**

. The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Here are “the times of refreshing” to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said: “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus.” Acts 3:19

**19 So you must change your hearts and lives! Come back to God, and he will forgive your sins. Then the Lord will send the time of rest.**

, 20

**20 And he will send Jesus, the One he chose to be the Christ.**

. Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13

**13 And the second beast does great miracles so that it even makes fire come down from heaven to earth while people are watching.**

. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand. The message will be carried not so much by argument as by the deep conviction of the Spirit of God. The arguments have been presented. The seed has been sown, and now it will spring up and bear fruit. The publications distributed by missionary workers have exerted their influence, yet many whose minds were impressed have been prevented from fully comprehending the truth or from yielding obedience. Now the rays of light penetrate everywhere, the truth is seen in its clearness, and the honest children of God sever the bands which have held them. Family connections, church relations, are powerless to stay them now. Truth is more precious than all besides. Notwithstanding the agencies combined against the truth, a large number take their stand upon the Lord’s side. (Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911], 611, 612.) Journal: After this week’s study of the passage, how can you summarize it?What are your practical conclusions after the study of the whole topic?Review the memory verse.How does it apply to your life this week?

inQuire

How do you understand Jesus’ words “the truth shall make you free”? What does it mean to be free in this context?How do the issues in the last days ultimately come down to authority?What are the implications of the glory of God filling the earth?What does “the message of justification by faith is the third angel’s message . . . ‘in verity [truth]’ ” (Ellen G. White, Evangelism [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946], p. 190) mean? What relationship does justification by faith have with the three angels’ messages? When does obedience become legalism? How can we guard against that?In what ways can someone who doesn’t keep the commandments of God still be a legalist?What answer can you give to those who criticize talking about the beasts and warnings in Revelation (besides the obvious answer that they’re in the Bible)?How do we strike a balance between being aware of the times and not getting caught up in speculation?